

are repeated in identical form in the introduction and the notes. This would not have pleased the shade of Burckhardt. Finally, Ganz has restored Burckhardt's original title, which Oeri—has changed—has changed for a very irrelevant reason in order to rescue his uncle from association with the then unpopular Nietzsche. I can see no need for this hypothesis. How could such a change have such an effect? Oeri himself said that he thought his title more appropriate to the lectures, as delivered, than one which Burckhardt had originally given to an earlier and very different version; as indeed it is.

For although Burckhardt disclaimed any historical "philosophy" or any *Welgeschichtliche Ideen*, his disclaimer was particular, not general. The philosophy which he repudiated was that of Hegel, "the port idea of a 'World-Plan', the historical ideas of these of Ranke and his school. Hegel had subordinated history to a prototypical metaphysical system and had claimed for it a scientific character. Ranke, though he repudiated Hegelian metaphysics, supposed that the process of history was linear, directed, in spite of some ups and downs on the way, through successive stages of improvement, in the fulfilment of a higher purpose; and his disciples set themselves up as high priests of this doctrine of *Welgeschichtliche*. Moreover, this doctrine lent, in their eyes, a particular present advantage. It supplied an ideological justification for the policies of Prussia.

How this came about is one of the ironies of intellectual history. The starting-point of the German historians was the non-political philosophy of Winckelmann, Herder and Goethe. They had believed in the unity of the human personality, the "organic" totality and autonomy of national cultures, which were not to be judged by the complicated norms of "enlightened" modernity. But even they had shown that national culture cannot defend itself without the armature of a national state; and so, when the Prussian state offered itself as the protector of German culture, the philosophers easily transferred to the *Kulturstaat* the autonomy and the legitimacy previously granted to the

Kulturstaat. They ascribed to it a moral character superior to ordinary morality and allowed that it should pursue its own interest by its own "reason of state". States, said Ranke, are "ideas of God", and, under God—a distant, abstract Lutheran God—they pursued their own interest in their own way, in the literature of this new German Renaissance and had longed to breathe its air. When he arrived as a student in Germany, his letters glow with the excitement of discovery. "What a land! What a people!" he exclaimed. He felt that he owed everything to Germany. It was only later, when he saw the steady shift of the German intellectuals, that his views changed. Then he detached himself from their orthodoxy, and became a heretic, clinging, as heretics generally do, to the original gospel which the established Church, through the cult of power, has betrayed.

For Burckhardt could never accept the idea of the *Kulturstaat*. To him culture and state were completely different things, and the rights of one could not be assumed by the other. So, having retreated to Basel, he declared his absolute dissent. Culture, he believed, must never be sacrificed to power. Power is of itself evil and must not be allowed to make its own rules. "Great men" are not the agents of divine purpose, for there is no such purpose. History is not a linear process, directed by God. Human felicity hangs on slender filaments, and if these snap, we must reckon with our fate. History is indeed a process, and there are general laws which it obeys, but such laws are to be induced from experience, not deduced from philosophical abstractions: to discover them we must make "transverse sections through history, and that in as many directions as possible".

This general philosophy is implicit in all Burckhardt's historical works. He would take an age as a whole and look for its "totality", its "spirit", which he would then seek to define by a study of the tensions which produced it. This was how he approached the age of Constantine in 1852 and the Italian Renaissance in 1860. In each of these ages a new "spirit" asserted itself. Constantine was not the "great man" who realized the next stage in Droysen's *Theodicy*; he was personally a mean and cruel character, and all that he did was to allow the Church to sweep away the last relics of Hellenism—not its spirit but its dead residue, "the lifeless precipitate of once wonderful totality of being". However, in so doing, he made way for the new spirit which, having created the Church, was new enough to survive even the corruption of that Church by power. Similarly the Renaissance was the break-through of a spirit of individualism generated in the fierce competition of Italian society: a spirit which, after that wonderful efflorescence, would lend ultimately to a similar crisis to the break-up of European culture, the separation of politics from culture and religion, the capture by politics of both culture and religion, and now, since 1789, the transfer of political power to the masses—that is, to their leaders, the populist dictators of the future.

For by now, Burckhardt believed, the historic, organic culture of Europe was in "disolution". Ranke, "night", believe that it had been restored, with his "balance of power", in 1815, after the "interruption" of the French Revolution. He was wrong. The revolutions of 1848 proved him wrong. Europe in 1848 was "no longer a genuine social organism", and the advent of the 1850s and 1860s merely confirmed the fact. Though there might be a few half-decent decades, a sort of Roman Empire, first, the future was for money-making and naked power; culture would shrivel into a "lifeless precipitate" detached from the "wonderful totality of being" of which it once been the expression; and spirit, at best, it would survive, as in America, as the irrelevant luxury of the philistine rich.

This disintegration of European culture, at its spiritual heart, was the thought, "We may all perish, but at least I wish to know the spirit of which I am a part, the spirit of the culture of Europe." But his outcome

philosophy which sprang from the same roots but, being nurtured outside Germany, took a different form and direction. For Burckhardt too was a disciple of Winckelmann and Goethe. In his youth, in provincial Switzerland, he had been intoxicated by the literature of this new German Renaissance and had longed to breathe its air. When he arrived as a student in Germany, his letters glow with the excitement of discovery. "What a land! What a people!" he exclaimed. He felt that he owed everything to Germany. It was only later, when he saw the steady shift of the German intellectuals, that his views changed. Then he detached himself from their orthodoxy, and became a heretic, clinging, as heretics generally do, to the original gospel which the established Church, through the cult of power, has betrayed.

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Jacob Burckhardt

for the liberals of 1848 was nothing compared with his contempt for the conservative historians of Germany who persuaded themselves that Bismarck's *Realpolitik* was, somehow, the realization of Goethe's philosophy. To him, Bismarck was no better than Napoleon III: an adventurer who merely forestalled more radical competitors for the possession of naked power and made war to resolve internal problems. When the German professors lined up to applaud the creation of the Empire, he expressed his disgust at this *triumph des clercs*, this sacrifice of culture to power. "Oh those learned gentlemen who now chapsodize over this Prussianism! How will their eyes pop when they see the intellectual desolation of Germany that will date from 1870!"

It was during Bismarck's career of conquest that Burckhardt wrote and delivered his *Welgeschichtliche Betrachtungen*. He began them in Prussia but violently established his mastery in Germany, and he revised them when another war had made it a trilemma of Europe. In the years before 1868 he had been lecturing on medieval history, but now he decided to turn aside and summarize his whole, long-nurtured historical philosophy. Ganz suggests that his thought was "crystallized" by certain works which he read in September 1868. I suspect that the crash of empires spoke louder to him than any book from the university library. At all events, he now expressed his credo. Against the German historians, he declared explicitly that history is not predetermined, or linear, or progressive; that states are not organs of culture; that power is inherently evil; that "great men" are not the agents of Providence.

Meanwhile he set out his own positive philosophy. Central to it was the conviction that history is human, that its mechanism (for it has a mechanism) is internal to itself. But the mechanism is not entirely mechanical, for Burckhardt saw an immaterial historical force, the "spirit", which, though conditioned by internal tensions, had a vitality of its own and gave to any civilization its direction and character. The tensions which conditioned the spirit were three permanent forces, "die drei Potenzen", whose primacy Burckhardt thought out in that autumn of 1868: "culture", religion and state; and much of his lectures consists of an examination of the changing balance, of these three forces, of these three primary forces. In other words, in order to understand any society, we must discover this balance; and in history, we must trace the shifts in that balance, and, consequently, in the spirit which it conditions and which it conditions in turn.

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analysis, with its marvellous range of illustrations, there gradually emerges a modern application. This is the basis of the growth, in modern Europe, of a powerful state, severed from culture, dominating religion, and, in the end, irresponsible. In industrialization and the doctrine of political equality would place in the hands of populist dictators who would use it to destroy the relics of culture and make destructive war. This danger, which Napoleon III and Bismarck had shuddered, consolidated, for Burckhardt, "the great crisis of today is the concept of the state".

After this diversion, which consisted of an exactly with the turn of the *Realpolitik*, Burckhardt returned to the past. He wrote his lectures, as Goethe Civilization, and in them sought to analyse that "wonderful totality of being" whose dead relics had been swept away by Constantine. King thus saw the *Welgeschichtliche Betrachtungen* as a preparatory for the *Griechische Kulturgeschichte*. But their effect was more extensive than that. Together with the Greek lectures, they profoundly influenced the most famous teacher, Nietzsche. Nietzsche went beyond Burckhardt, and indeed alarmed Burckhardt by the audacity of his conclusions. But he took the concepts of his first challenging work, *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, and, as we saw, from Burckhardt, and he acknowledged his debt. Burckhardt's ideas also disturbed the complexity of the German historians. In a review of his *Griechische Kulturgeschichte* (the first of the two works to be published), Friedrich Meinecke remarked, as one correcting a wayward colleague, that Burckhardt had cut himself off from the great school of German historians. Meinecke pointed the historian of *The Idea of Reason in State*, looked always, as he was later wrote, to Ranke as his "guiding pole star". In 1940, after similar misgivings, he would respond to Hitler's wishes as Ranke had done to those of Bismarck.

Only after the "catastrophe" of 1945 did he begin to doubt and to ask whether it may not be that Burckhardt, not Ranke, was of importance to us and to our historians.

It may indeed; but the question arises, in what text shall we read Burckhardt's credo: in Oeri's elegant text or in the original notes, published by Ganz? Burckhardt was a specialist (how Burckhardt would have hated the concept!) who would use the latter, and those who would use the former, but I suspect that Burckhardt wrote with confidence and the former. Libraries which supply both the textual crack and the

GRAHAM GREENE

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His has been a life largely spent, as Graham Greene puts it himself, in the attempt to escape boredom. Fear of boredom has taken him everywhere: en "an absurd and reckless trek through Liberia", to Tabasco during religious persecution, to the Kikuyu reserve when Mau-Mau was active, a *leproserie* in the Congo, Malaya in a state of emergency, the French war in Vietnam... the list is not complete. These were adult attempts to escape, but boredom also enveloped Graham Greene's youth like a sea mist, alleviated only by moments of terror and despair. At the age of five he saw a man about to cut his throat, in the unhappy schooldays of his early teens he tried to saw open his leg with a penknife, drank hypo in the hope that it was poisonous, ate a bunch of deadly nightshade, took twenty aspirins, drained a bottle of hay-fever drops. The best-known of these attempts to evade everyday tedium was the game called Russian roulette; at the age of fifteen Graham Greene discovered his brother's revolver, put a bullet into one chamber, held the revolver behind his back, spun the chambers, put the muzzle to his right ear, and—click. "The charge had moved into the firing position. I was out by one." After six experiments had ended with the same click "I was through with the drug", although the struggle against boredom had to go on. At Balliol he contemplated the idea of becoming a double agent, and a little later had a perfectly good tooth extracted. "A few minutes' unconsciousness was like a holiday from the world."

So far Mr Greene in *A Sort of Life*, some fragments of autobiography which make very clear why he also says in the same volume that those lines of Browning beginning "Our interest's on the dangerous edge of things" can serve as an epitaph for all his books. The emotional truth of this is evident everywhere in the novels. It is not certain, however, that the autobiographical moments recorded here and in *Ways of Escape* are always literally accurate, and this is not only because Greene has avoided infringing what he calls the copyright of others' lives, or because he is a bit of a joker, and even perhaps sometimes a private joker. He has often been praised for the quality of his observation, but this lies in the creation of an atmosphere appropriate to period, place and characters rather than in what things actually look like.

There are few detailed descriptions of people in the novels: lips, noses, figures are rarely made explicit, and the description of Father Thomas's nose in *A Burnt-Out Case* has the shock of rarity. Places give off an exotic feeling that is almost invariable, whether it is the river down which Querry moves to the same novel, or the view of boat passengers crossing a "grey wet quay, over a wilderness of rails and poles" on the first page of the early *Sambourin Train*. The river, the quay, fifty other scenes in the novels, have a cinematic effect that is brilliant yet general, offering an overall scene rather than particular observation of the details within it. In small matters Graham Greene is often a faulty recorder. When he says that the Berkhamstead of his childhood contained "pointed faces" like the knives on playing cards, he must have had a special pack, for in standard packs two knives are shown full face; when he recalls a chess player saying "I enter with a Queen's Pawn Two" memory betrays him, for the Queen's pawn will be on the second square before the game begins; when he says that before the First World War he went from Overstrand in Norfolk to watch a county cricket match it is hard to believe that this can have been so, for the journey from the Norfolk coast to a place where county cricket was played would then have been a very long one.

There is some ambiguity also about that story of the revolver. Greene knew what to do with it, he says, because he had been reading a book which told how White Russian officers played the potentially suicidal game in order (but of course) "to escape boredom". Ossendowski is named as the likely author. Ferdinand Ossendowski's *Beasts, Men and Gods*, a poster-coloured account of adventures and escapes from the Bolsheviks in Siberia and Mongolia after the Russian Revolution, was published in 1922. It was a popular work, and the young Graham Greene might well have read it by 1923, but although the first part of the book is called "Drawing Lots With Death" and the whole contains some wonderful and indeed incredible stories, there is in it no account of White Russians playing Russian roulette. When one remarks also that in the original, but not in the most recent, version of the story it is said that the bullets may have been blanks—and that the phrase "Russian roulette" was not used when the essay appeared in *The Last Childhood* (1951), the thought does cross one's mind that Greene may have derived his information from Luntic Kolnitsky, the great Russian writer discovered by Max Beerbohm. An alcoholic from the age of nine, and a man who lavished "an equally fierce scorn and hatred on children, on trees and flowers and the moon", Kolnitsky would certainly have enjoyed playing Russian roulette every day of his life.

But whether or not the revolver in the corner cupboard is in part one of Graham Greene's jokes, the ambiguity rather than the accuracy of it is important, for the ambiguity reflects his belief that "he a novelist his novel is the only reality". One is in no doubt here that the writer means just what he says. The novels have a reality, truthfulness and meaning for their author in a sense that life does not. One of his fine essays about Henry James, Greene plausibly suggests that the ruling passion in James's work was the idea of treachery. There is a ruling passion in his own work too, the idea of faith and its betrayal. This is the subject that he has approached over and over again, turning it so that it sometimes shines dazzlingly and is at other times more blurred, considering its application to a variety of characters and circumstances, but always always towards that point at which the situation demands a decisive action. So Josephine *The Convent* moves into the guerrilla world of which he is ignorant, Querry dies to preserve the secret that he did not commit adultery, Father José in *The Power and the Glory* leaves a place of safety to say Mass for a dying gangster, and in *The Honorary Consul* the atheist Doctor Plarr and the former priest Leon both make sacrificial gestures leading to their deaths.

There are several other themes in the novels and entertainments (a word used "to distinguish them from more serious novels", perhaps misleadingly used, since it seems wrongly to imply that the other books are not entertaining), just as James is involved in many subjects other than treachery, and indeed for both writers treachery often seems inextricably linked with heroism, and a kind of love. From the beginning, Greene's links with the thriller have been close. As he has said, his first published novel, *The Man Within*, began with a hunted man, and often in a more sophisticated form. Querry, for instance, may be said to be hunted down by the public world from which he has tried to escape. One wishes Greene had written the book that was in his mind as an alternative to *The Heart of the Matter*, an entertainment in which the criminal was known, the pursuing detective uncertain, an idea full of possibilities which was abandoned when Wilson, the visitor to West Africa, with his "bald pink knees", was subdued as a character to Scobie, the Commissioner of Police.

The early Greene was very much a novelist of the 1930s. The symbols of the decade came naturally to him, the railway, station and the traveller, the suggesting arrival, departure, the difficulty of human communication.

Greene's own later view of his work at this time is an unduly hard one, discovering little more than a good sense of here, an interesting character there. He feels the last sixty pages of *It's a Battlefield* to be wholly successful, picks out the character of Harpe and the final scene of *Sambourin Train* as good, deprecates the label of "Catholic writer" which has been attached to him since *Brighton Rock*. He is, he insists, "not a Catholic writer but a writer who happens to be a Catholic". Yet one surely does not "happen to be" a Catholic, any more than the present reviewer happens to be an atheist. For

(One abandoned novel had the almost super-typical title *The Other Side of the Border*.) Whatever may be missed by the Greene ear, his ear was perfectly tuned to the song and songs of a time in which people were pressing Button B, asking for the loan of five hob, and saying "I don't mind if I do" when invited to have a drink. There are memorable fragments of song, such as "What did Aladdin say? When he came to Pekin?" and "One night in an alley Lord Rothschild said to me", as well as the longer pieces perceptively noted by Bernard Bergonzi. They catch perfectly the cynical-sentimental tone in lyrics of the time, keeping them always this side of parody.

If you want to express That kind of gloom You feel alone in a double room. The typical Greene protagonists of the period are even more alone in double beds than in double rooms. They are figures doomed by the machine age, by monopoly capitalism, above all by their own weakness. Anthony Farrar in *England Made Me*, D working faithfully for what he knows to be the losing side in *The Confidential Agent*, Plarr in *Brighton Rock*, all in a sense are lost. They are no-hopers, people unable to accommodate themselves to the way life is lived, as Anthony's sister Kate is able to do in *End of the Road*, the exuberant big-breasted Ida Arnold in another. These early books are as good an introduction as could be wished to everyday feelings in the decade, offering a much wider social range than the novels of Waugh and Isherwood during those years. The opening of *Brighton Rock* is masterly, with its picture of the hunted man sent by his newspaper to leave bits of largesse around on the tops of baskets or under plates on restaurant tables, in his role as Koley Kibber of the *Messenger*.

(There was a real-life counterpart named Leiby Lud.) The effect achieved is not one of literal realism. It is rather that fragments of reality are wonderfully magnified through the glass of a strange, powerful imagination. These novels have what Wilkie Collins called a whiff of the Actual, but they also transform the actual, giving the Brighton sea from a train journey through Europe, a modern office building in Sweden, a significance that in drab reality hardly possesses. Within the limits of what is attempted, these are almost wholly successful books, novels using the framework of the thriller for serious purposes.

Flickers of doubt arise only when the author is moved to draw the character up to his own level of intelligence and knowledge. D wonders whether a picture is by Ety whom he is unlikely ever to have seen an Ety, Plarr's language occasionally outstrips his semi-literacy. There are also immensely enjoyable inventions, such as the universal language Entrenationo, and The Mothers of the Free Nations, which occasionally affect that important whiff of the Actual, and moments of more private joking. What, for example, is a "pawer" the nouns used more than once by Plarr for what would now be called a slug? Partridge does not know the word, and although the Oxford Supplement gives it, the reference is to northern dialect and tramps' slang, the only modern examples being from Graham Greene himself. It seems highly unlikely that *beet* was used by pre-war Brighton raccoons, does this matter? In a book like *Brighton Rock* which depends so much on our belief in the setting and the language, yes, marginally it does.

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a writer to be a Catholic, particularly in a society where Catholics are a small minority, must be important, and it is inevitable that Mr Graham Greene as for Evelyn Waugh his beliefs should have affected the standpoint from which his novels were written. All of the important books written after *The Power and the Glory*, including *The Honorary Consul* which the author prefers to all the others, could have been written only by a Catholic. The lighter and more thrillerish works of these later years, such as *Our Man in Havana* and *The Human Factor*, are uncertain about pines and people in a way that the early novels are not, or move into a flippancy that seems only partly intended.

It is no the finest of the later novels—*The Comedians*, *A Burnt-Out Case* and *The Quiet American*, as well as *The Honorary Consul*—that Graham Greene's reputation will chiefly rest, and they gather power and beauty from complexities in the personal faith of one who has "an intellectual if not an emotional belief in Catholic dogma". It is noticeable that in them Graham Greene is strenuously determined to play fair. An opposition is set up between those with faith and those who lack it, and the unbelievers are often given the best lines, sometimes even the best notions. That is wholly in contrast to *Brighton Rock*, where we are in no doubt that Plarr's view that life for the wicked must end in damnation is infinitely preferable to Ida Arnold's delighted acceptance of physical enjoyment. The portrait of Ida is condemnatory in a way that is very untypical, but in *The Power and the Glory* also the pains of the faithful are extolled, although the Lieutenant who pursues and in the end destroys Father José is treated respectfully. He has "the dignity of an idea", there is passion in his desire to root out religion

utterly and to destroy "all that [is] poor, superstitious and corrupt", leaving the peasants with the truth, that they live in a vacant universe and should be happy in any way they choose. By contrast the whisky priest exhorts the faithful to suffer. "Pray that you will suffer more and more. Never get tired of suffering... that is all part of heaven—the preparation. In heaven there will be no unjust laws, no hunger, no hillying soldiers. Father José is no better as a man than his pie-in-the-sky promises are as consolation. He has fathered a child, drinks too much, errs in many ways; but in the end we are meant to sympathize with the priest's faith and not with the Lieutenant's reasons.

In the later books the approach is much more subtle, and the message is not the same. Often they look towards the possibility that faith and reason may be united, so that—as it were—the Lieutenant and the priest are joined in one person, having faith yet working practically for human good, in the overthrow of a dictatorship, or the freeing of a country's natives from foreign rule. These themes are persistently pursued through plots which often use, but at a distance and with great delicacy, some mechanics of the thriller. In *The Honorary Consul* the machinery is set in motion when a group of rebels in Argentina kidnap the wrong man, taking Charley Fortnum, the unimportant honorary consul, instead of the American Ambassador. Through that machinery Doctor Plarr, the detached sympathizer, is forced step by unwilling step towards action. In *The Comedians* a complexity of motives sends Brown and Jones out on their hopeless mission to the Haitian rebels, in *A Burnt-Out Case* Querry is moved to what is in rational terms an absurd act of sacrifice for Morie Rycker. The portrait of the

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innocent destroyer Pyle, the quiet American of the book's title, give much offence in the United States, yet there is a sense in which Pyle remains the truly virtuous man of the story, even though his virtues spread disaster. The progress has been one from Catholicism to humanism, a differentiation Graham Greene would be unlikely to accept.

Yet to insist on a single theme is pressing too hard, ignoring too much. Just as Greene's own remarking of treachery as the prime human motive is an insight which yet leaves out of account the novelist's social sense and feeling for comedy, so it is doing Graham Greene much less than justice to make these novels seem nothing but moralities, even complex ones. Much else goes into them: most immediately an overwhelming attraction towards scenes exotic to the stay-at-home reader; not only a love of Indo-China which is called "a magic point, a living-cup", but also affection for Haiti and Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo, Argentina, the Congo, West Africa. Why, Seobee wonders at the moment when he is swerving in his car to avoid dead pig-dogs in the road, why do I love this West African state so much? And since there are not only dead pig-dogs in the road but live rats in the bathroom and cockroaches around everywhere, the question seems a good one. For the central Greene character, however, these are almost recommendations, testimony to the fact that they are living on the dangerous edge of things and have reached a point from which there is no turning back. Boredom for them is a suburban life, the train to the office, the meat in the fridge, the wife in the bed.

There is a level on which these books may be taken as adventure stories. Certainly in them we are asking what will happen to Chirley Fortnum, how Jones will get out of the Venezuelan Embassy, whether Seobee can avoid Yusef's traps: and the answers do not upset a reader's sense of the novel's disappointment. It is this skill in shaping and telling a story astonishingly and primarily responsible for winning Graham Greene so many readers. The organization of plots – the decision, for example, to show us almost at the beginning of *The Quiet American* that Pyle is dead – and the placing of scenes is done with supreme skill. On another plane, the power in creating atmosphere that earlier gave memorable views of unfinishable hills of London, is now used to show us empty hotel in Saigon during the French Indo-China war, the details of a leprosy, and on another level still, the later novels delight by an irony now beautifully understated, where in the early books it was sometimes too pungent for full effectiveness.

If one had in choice a single scene to demonstrate such irony, it might be that in which Doctor Piar, at the suggestion of the British Ambassador, has reluctantly agreed to try to organize the sending of a letter to *The Times*, appealing for action on Chirley Fortnum's behalf, by the Anglo-Argentinian Club in the city where Fortnum was honorary consul. The whole project is absurd, for there is no Club there are only two other Englishmen in the city. No matter: Piar writes the letter, and then invites to dinner the other Englishman and a pensive Argentinian novelist named Doctor Seobee. For the purpose of the letter they will constitute the Club, and Saavedra as President will sign the letter. Saavedra agrees, but says that he must take the letter, name and rewrite it, regardless of the fact that action must be immediate to have any chance of effect. Told that Fortnum may have only two or three days to live, Saavedra is unmoved. Rewrite the letter at the dinner with Piar, he reflects the idea. "Do you believe writing is as easy as that?" And then what of the translation? He trusts Piar, of course, but will like to check the translation before you send it abroad. A further element is added to the scene by the fact that a hundred pages earlier Saavedra has insisted that a political novel must be timeless, and that to describe directly what is happening next door in Paraguay is journalism, not literature. Yet Saavedra is not merely mocked, as he might have been in an early novel, but is seen, as a sympathetic, and in the end even pitiable figure.

John Levison's *Consul* and *The Comedians* are particularly rich in memorable minor characters, including the desecrated Doctor Humphries in the first, and in the second the vegetarian Presidential candidate Mr Smith. The touching final view of the self-important Saavedra at home in his narrow, dingy room with two suits hanging in a cupboard, four ties dangling from a rod, and a refrigerator that doesn't work, could not have been written by the author of *Brighams Rock*. He might have shown us the scene, but the effect would have been wholly satirical, like the portrait of the best-selling novelist Savary in *Stamboul Train*.

Yet the separation between early and late Greene is not by any means total. An ascetic distaste for human greed and desire runs through all the work. In the world of these novels this is always beautiful. Attractive women are also often small – Marie Ryker, Martha of *The Comedians*, neat Anne Crowder, Lucia Davidge in *English Made Me*, Phuong whose bones are fragile as a bird's, the "absurdly young" Rose Cullen, "unashamedly thin" small-breasted Clara in *The Honourable Consul*. Fat men are to be distrusted, whether they are Mr Chalmers in *Brighams Rock*, Riven's paymaster in *A Gun For Sale* who hands over money with a scowl dripping from his mouth, Luis Pineda whose punishment for being overweight is to accept his fate as a cuckold, or the grotesque fat journalist Parkinson, Greene notes Parkinson, along with Ida Arnold and two or three others, as characters who refused to come alive, but although the author's dislike of him is un concealed,

an honourable, not quite successful, attempt is made to give even awful Parkinson his code of ethics.

The attempt is a tribute to the development of Graham Greene's humanism, and *Monsieur Quixote* is important in showing what may be the last stage of the novelist's long argument with himself about the needs, nature and effects of faith. This, it must be said, is almost the extent of its interest. It tells, in brief episodes, the adventures of an unwelcome village priest in La Mancha, created a *Monsieur* by a visiting Bishop whose car has broken down. Quixote offers hospitality in the form of a horseman's steak, which the Bishop pronounces the finest he has ever eaten, gets the car going – it had been suffering only from a lack of petrol – and receives undesired promotion. The local Bishop, much displeased, suggests that Quixote should take a holiday, and he does in the company of Saneho, the Communist mayor who has just lost his post. They travel in an old Sea 600 called by Quixote Rocinante.

The two stay the night in a brothel which Quixote mistakes for a hotel, the priest hears a confession in a lavatory where he has taken refuge because he thinks he is being pursued by the secret police, sees a piece of soft porn called "A Maiden's Prayer" and remarks that the actors seemed to suffer a lot from the sounds they made. The tone throughout is lightly whimsical, a little like that of Frederick William Rolfe's *Stories Told Me*. There are

occasional faint digs or gentle pats at the shade of the Generalissimo, and in the delirium of his last illness Quixote says "Bugger the Bishop" – under the delusion, one would like to think, that he is the late George V buggering Bognor.

The book will not weigh heavily in the scale of Graham Greene's achievements. The parallel with Cervantes has little point, the humour is much more like that of the unsuccessful plays than that of the successful novels, a joke about blowing up French letters to make balloons has been used before. Yet *Monsieur Quixote* is important, because it carries the author's humanism to a point where religion seems a secondary consideration to improving social conditions. The whisky priest exerts his flock to suffer, but Quixote (also a heavy drinker, but feeling no need to make apologies for it) reads Marx in the brothel. "Perhaps a true Communist is a sort of priest," Quixote says to Saneho, but it seems as clear that a true priest is a sort of Communist. This particular priest is also far from being a whole-hearted believer. It is an awful thing, Quixote tells Saneho, not to have doubts, and just as awful to live in a wholly rational world. There are absurdities in all eras: in Communism about money and the withering away of the state, in the church about *coitus intransitus*. The priest and the Communist debate on equal terms, and the author seems to sympathize with them both. Remembering Graham Greene's recent statement that "I find nothing

unsympathetic in atheism, even in Marxist atheism", and his praise of Marx as more perceptive than most, one wonders whether it would be right to welcome a late apostate from Christianity. Can somebody so much in love with doubt be truly said to hold any beliefs at all?

No doubt it is wrong to put the matter so crudely, and one's concern with the novelist, who may differ from the human being. The human being lives, the novelist writes about the lives of others. Graham Greene the novelist has found strength in his later work through a Manichaeanism that balances faith against works, passivity against action, pleasure against goodness, detachment against involvement. Sometimes the balance tips one way, sometimes the other. "Action is dangerous, isn't it?" Martha says, and her lover Brown agrees, but they are condemned by inaction. What is said in the dedication of *A Burnt-Out Case*, that the book is "an attempt to give dramatic expression to various types of belief, half-belief, and non-belief", is true of all his finest novels. Their beauty and effectiveness spring from the fact that as a novelist Graham Greene is able to transcend whatever, as a human being, he may believe in a dogmatic sense. His characters exist in their own right, not as creatures of religious or social propaganda. Through them is expressed not certainty but doubt. They struggle, and fail or survive, in a world where good and evil, in themselves and in society, are locked in an unending struggle: the world of the Manichee.

people, the Political Officer harps on the complex privacies of English life. A possible truth is concealed from him at this point, which is that some English people find middle-aged white American males extremely boring. There is that gulf between the World Cup and the World Series – and what does "World" mean in the second case?

He is right, though, to find the young different: "We had style, we worked hard, we were full of life, we understood money, we succeeded where others failed. We were associated with luck." This is true of a modern Daisy Miller, Mary Snowflake, a major in English from Gainesville, Florida. She on the other hand finds London "sadder, darker, stranger, narrower, newer, dirtier, more oppressive" than she had expected. Her creator has an intense feeling for the place, especially the districts south of the river, which is surely the product of his rides and those terrible wanderings that make up the afternoons of an author. He carries on a tradition here, which starts with *The Princess Casanoviana* and continues through *The Waste Land*.

To the Political Officer, however, we Brits come off fairly badly. Whether as the aristocratic beauty he falls for in "An English Unofficial Rose" or as Mary Snowflake's scruffy layabout in "Pony", we are mean, grudging, double-dealing. At our worst, and with most justice, perhaps, in "Children", Scaduto and his desperate wife (Theroux's diplomatic wives catch despair like the common cold) send their three sons to a prep school in Richmond. "English schools are awesome," Scaduto announces, "Latin, French, Science, Scripture, No fingerpainting, no bull sessions, no Little League." Scaduto and the

Political Officer, spending the afternoon in Richmond Park with the boys and their three English friends, listen agape to a conversation of piping snobbery and shrill boasting, which ends with the three little Scadutos trying to deny their shameful origins and getting howled down.

Harrowing, too, though in a different way, is the encounter with the guest of honour at a dinner given by the Ambassador at his residence, Winfield House in Regent's Park. The Prime Minister is accompanied by her husband, thought to be a joke figure but in fact kindly and funny – though we are hardly shown this. She herself speaks in "a hearty headmistress shout". The other guests find her formidable: "her face was vain, unimpressed and attractive, and her body square and powerful. Her eyes were heavy-lidded, and there was a sack-like heaviness in her, a willfulness and impatience that gave her an air of strength."

The intrusion of real people into fiction is too often a cloying trick, but here we have the detail and resonances that only an imaginative writer can provide. (There is a novelist among the guests, "fortyish and talkative, delighted to be there, his mug face gleaming with gratitude." Perhaps we owe the description to him.)

Since Paul Theroux started writing about a decade and a half ago, he has published some eighteen books. Surely there can be no such thing as a complete professional, without commitments or obsessions, with no grudge in the oyster. Yet here was someone who seemed to be writing in order to be a writer, his skills increasing, his wastepaper basket presumably empty at the end of the day's stint. His travel books, disappointed by their lack of necessity,

The White Towel

Surrendering to the bathrobe the imprint of a grubby hand would mean political acquiesces to my younger days.

Now older, wallowing in filth, it is easier to be coarsely: coloured towels can cover up such obvious defects.

Ian Kendrick

Worshipping the Eternal Feminine

Peter Kemp

JOHN FOWLES
Maudslayi
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John Fowles, with his jackdaw's eye for slightly flashy bits of erudition, never tires of dropping into his prose abstruse words he has picked up (his new book, *Maudslayi*, plumes itself at one point on its use of "the distinctly rare word macarabesque"). Sometimes, opaque verbal nuggets are embedded in his titles. The name of his collection of penes, *The Aristos*, needed an explanatory note: "aristos" is taken from the ancient Greek. It is singular and means roughly "the best for a given situation". The short story, "Poor Koko", equipped with an epigraph in Old Cornish – went in for special linguistic inscrutability: its narrator had finally to explain that "Koko... is a Japanese word and means correct filial behaviour". The title of Fowles's new novel likewise requires glossing: "maudslayi" (obsolete, said to be of Etruscan origin) is a term meaning, a footnote eventually discloses, "A0 addition of comparatively small importance, especially to a literary effort or discourse". What is to follow, at once modesty and cautious, it typifies the book: a cat's cradle of safety nets set up to enable Fowles to go through a series of dizzying but ultimately self-applauding routines.

In one way, the book has much in common with Fowles's first published novel, *The Collector*. It focuses on a man and a woman closed in together: she is both idealized and exploited; sexual antagonisms and excitements crackle between them; their struggles are symbolic of something wider. "We're two people who happen to be locked in the same prison cell", the man declares, evoking thoughts of Miranda to *The Collector* trapped in the cellar while her imprisoned was trapped in his obsession with her. But, despite some structural resemblance, there is a vast difference between the two books. Whereas *The Collector* was a thriller, the strain towards allegory, *Maudslayi* is arch sex-farce with a trimming of aesthetics. The setting of this latest book is not so much a prison cell as a brain cell: it all takes place inside the writer's head.

When the story opens, Miles Green, his mind blurred by grey drifts of amnesia, is coming back to consciousness in a hospital room. On hand to treat him are a female doctor, suspectly and severe, and a West Indian nurse whose physique looks more generous. "Announcing that 'The memory nerve-centre in the brain is closely associated with the one controlling gonadic activity', so that stimulation of one area will galvanize the other, the doctor, with clinical hubbly, initiates a session of sextherapy. Bostly erotic? 'Come on, Mr Green. You've touched the public area before. It won't bite you.' Dr Delfie betrays Miles towards orgasm. Flashes of blue-film fantasies are spliced with nattyish luts and taunts. Then, as the prescribed climax is achieved, a ferocious and furious female punk bursts into the room, causing the doctor and nurse to vanish. Her opening diatribe, indicting Miles for filthy-minded fantasizing, tilts the previous scene into a new perspective. Her subsequent metamorphosis into a Greek maiden with a lyre reveals what's behind it all.

The woman – flustering through various avatars in the course of the narrative: doctor, nurse, punk, nymph, bluestocking, geisha – is Erato, one of the Muses. The child of Mnemosyne, goddess of memory ("you seem to forget who I'm the daughter of", she later remarks), she has naturally come into Fowles's mind in the course of a story that starts with amnesia. Penned in together, she and Miles, the author's alter ego, are pushed through surreal permutations designed to display in comic form Fowles's ideas about artistic inspiration.

Central to these is his insistence that it is implicitly coupled with sex. This is

no new preoccupation of Fowles's. In "The Ethny Tower", an ageing but still lusty painter employed a young girl to stimulate him into productivity: always calling her "the Mouse", he explains her name by printing "the letter M" and then, after a space, the letters "U.S.E." In the space between the M and the U the wrinkled hand drew... an O-shaped vulva". In *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, the Muses were casually connected with concupiscence: "We're off to old Ma Terpsichore's", yelled a man en route for a brothel. "Worship at the muses' shrine, don't y'know." With *Maudslayi*, Fowles argues that it is Erato, the presiding spirit of amorous poetry, who is now responsible for fiction (a fanciful belief about the novel's pedigree which he has expounded before). And – appropriately perhaps in a writer who has said, "I teach better if I seduce" – he puts erotic fantasy to didactic use: "The sex was just a metaphor, for heaven's sake", Miles exasperatedly informs Erato as she berates him. "There has to be some kind of objective correlative for the hermeneutical side of it."



Nijinsky in Le Spectre de la Rose, a woodcut by Valentine Gross, dated 1912; from a suite of Ballet and Theatre Material to be held at Sotheby's, 34 and 35 New Bond Street, London W1 on Thursday October 28. The sale will include items of costume and décor design, photographs and posters.

Pitting writer against Muse in discourse and intercourse, *Maudslayi* is a strange blend of soft porn and not-very-hard thinking about fiction. Fowles tends to see literature as a confrontation: "the writer", *The French Lieutenant's Woman* says, "puts... conflicting wants in the ring and then describes the fight". In *Maudslayi*, Miles struggles to confine his Muse inside scenarios which she mocks and sabotages, while her own attempts to discomfit and deride him are, in turn, subverted by her sexual feelings.

An extremely sensual censor, Erato keeps finding that her efforts to stand off from Miles twist provokingly into come-ons.

For most of the book, in fact, she alternates between: ephania, and carnality. Like other Fowles leading ladies, she is both tormenting, inspirational and trammelled by cheap sexual fantasy. To the novel's opening paragraphs, masculinity is associated with "a sense of belowness, impotence, foolishness". It's hard to see why, since the ensuing images of woman that are conjured up are all markedly dispiriting. Some are the oblique fragments of pornographic day-dreams; others, stereotyped assemblages of nymph on heat with a shepherd or a sort of pipe. It is later loftily denounced: "As if any contemporary woman who actually existed would talk in that revoltingly fey way about shepherds and pipes." An episode in which Erato

appears as a literary intellectual fantasizing about being assaulted by a man who "ravages my deepest principles" subsequently gets dismissed as an "exceedingly feeble imitation of a hookish young woman". Repeatedly, the novel tries to have its cake and eat it or, at any rate, throw over it and do some nibbling before announcing it is stale and tasteless.

Wary and guarded, *Maudslayi* is also self-regarding. Cloy allusions to Fowles's other books are roughly scattered round. Erato decries Miles's fictional treatment of women with the words, "You just collect and mummify them. Lock them up in a cellar and gloat over them. Like Bluebeard." This, of course, is what happens in *The Collector*; and it was, Fowles has revealed, a performance of Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle* that partly inspired that book. There is also nudging reference to *The French Lieutenant's Woman*: "That text where I had twelve different endings – it was perfect as it was, no one had ever done that before. Then you get it all and I'm left with just three. The whole point of the thing was missed."

The various endings of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* are the most notorious instance of Fowles's eagerness to keep his options open. In *Maudslayi*, this propensity runs riot. A statement has hardly been made before it is countered: a tone scarcely established before it is switched. Miles and Erato hectically helter-skelter in and out of diverse roles. But all the book's chameleon cavorings can't disguise the fact that it has nothing very new to offer. Miles is the regulation Fowles male, stumbling in exasperated need after a woman who figures as mentor and as mistress. Erato is the standard-issue Eternal Feminine. There is the customary indulgence in sery charades. Well in evidence again is Fowles's taste for female pieties, his fondness for juxtaposing women in contrasting styles or colours – "the dark and light female bodies" of the nurse and doctor, punk with guiter set against maiden with a lyre.

The one innovative thing about *Maudslayi* is that it represents Fowles's first large-scale venture into comedy – a territory, it soon becomes apparent, where he is not at his most sure-footed. After a promisingly lively start, his tendency to reiteration and longwinded asserts itself, and the farce founders into the protracted and predictable. There are some skittish flights and parries at the concept of the reflexive novel, a genre *Maudslayi* sometimes guys. But most of the comedy settles for something simpler. Second-hand merriment about members rising in parliament and lovers not being up to very hard thinking about fiction. There is some lumbering whimsy about Erato's life in ancient Greece, having fun with her attractive aunt from Cyprus or touring the temples, as one of "the Delphi Dancing Girls", with her prissy uncle-avenger "Aunt Polly" (Apollo Musagetes is his "stage name"). Disney-esque cuteness frequently whips its way into the prose: "I was wearing a rather dinky little pale saffron number with a key-pattern fringe embroidered in red wool round the hem. It came from a darling Caphetan boutique behind the Stoa, an amazing shop in a spring sale."

And for more knowing readers, there are scolding chunks of literary docosity – as when Erato reminisces about a wet afternoon she spent with T. S. Eliot: "for some absurd reason he got himself up as a house-agent's clerk. With some ridiculous hat he'd borrowed from a textile millionaire. I was rather bored and tired, he frankly – never mind, in the end, flushed and – gave me one final assault on his knees. Brightly advertising his frivolity – the last word in the book is 'cuckoo' – *Maudslayi* obviously aims to be a *jeu d'esprit*. It merely succeeds in being gamsome.

The latest (Autumn 1982: Volume 24 No. 3) edition of *Critical Quarterly* includes an essay on William Golding's *The Spire* by Laurence Lerner, "Jocelyn's Polly" or, Down with the spire" and a study of "Conrad's covert" plots and transtextual narratives" by Cedric R. Watts. Also included are essays on *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, "University Fiction" and the "university crisis" and *Freud's A Doll's House*.

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The infant American republic perfectly exemplified the distrust of executive power characteristic of eighteenth-century liberal revolutionaries. What it sought first was the overthrow of a government. What it sought next was the entrenchment of the principle of popular representation. Only third in its priorities was the establishment of a nation-wide administrative system of its own. Had not a Congress been adequate to direct a commander-in-chief and wage - end win - a war of independence? Had not a Congress proved adequate to effect the transition from war to peace? Was it, after all, as obvious as the pundits insisted, that in addition to executive departments there had to be a chief executive? A civilian George Washington, no less, to organize and run the federal government? What had the long rule of George III taught if not that a single chief executive meant a menacing concentration of power, that with power went patronage and with patronage corruption, and with both, faction and the elevation of sectional interests above those of the whole? Was it for this that patriots had fought and died?

So not only was it 1789 before the need for a federal executive was grudgingly conceded, at Philadelphia itself it was not until the last few weeks of the Convention that the dimensions of the presidential office began to take shape, and only in the last hectic days was an acceptable plan for election contrived. At the heart of the problem, of course, was the need to combine the classic virtues of executive energy and legislative control, initiative and restraint, federal responsibility and state (and private) liberties. Without the availability of the generally acceptable Hero of the Revolution to launch the whole experiment it is doubtful whether the gamble on one-man executive would have been taken at all. And the moment George Washington stepped down at the end of his second term the weaknesses of the Philadelphia solution revealed themselves anew.

The aim of securing a President of all the people by eliminating, as nearly as possible, the people themselves from his selection, was immediately demonstrated to be unrealistic. The electoral college of the Pounding Fathers' invention, which in disinterested conceit would select the best man to lead the nation, ignoring party claims, group passions and vulgar popularity, degenerated into an assortment of rubber stamps who merely registered the product of regional rivalry and factional conflict. The process by which these illustrious of eighteenth-century Rousseauism were shattered by the realities of Tocqueville's nineteenth-century "tyrannical majorities" is essentially the theme of both Richard P. McCormick's and M. J. Heale's books. From title to content they appear, at first sight, to cover identical ground and to reach the same conclusions. In fact they have different emphases which reflect the authors' divergent interests.

Professor McCormick is primarily concerned with the evolution of constitutional and political processes. In consequence he gives prominence to the analysis of his exposition, to the proceedings of the Philadelphia

Convention and sees the subsequent developments in "the game for the Presidency" as phases in the adaptation of the game to match the developments in the American party system. Those phases he identifies as four. There is an uncertain era from 1789 to 1804 when the unanticipated consequences of Art III, Section 1, 3 lead to confusion over the system of presidential selection. When this is cleared up by the passage of the Twelfth Amendment the power of the Virginia dynasty determines that until 1824 the "game" shall be played according to Virginia rules. The twenty years following the end of Virginia's ascendancy see a turbulent contest of sectional-based factions. Party is a dirty word on everyone's lips, but is taking shape in everyone's heart. Fourthly and finally, by 1844 it emerges as the accepted reality, as the essence in fact of the presidential game. The electorate reaches mess proportions. Democracy has arrived. The contest for the presidency has assumed something very like the modern shape. The contest is about parties, even if, as so often happens, the parties are about the winning of the presidency.

Both authors limit their detailed study to the period before the Civil War, though McCormick has an interesting epilogue in which he argues that the long duration of his fourth phase is now drawing to a close with the decline of the American party system, since the New Deal and Fair Deal, he indulges in some interesting speculations as to what this may mean for the presidential office. But though periods and, up to a point, contents of the two studies are similar, the differences in their treatment are substantial. Heale's "presidential quest" begins essentially after the Convention has done its work and does not look beyond 1850. This leaves him generous room, in a treatment in any case more sparsely planned, to explore the cultural and sociological evolution of the half-century. If this spaciousness has occasionally led him to indulge in a little repetition, that is a gain for colour and for a treatment which and detail. Heale piles a lively pen and has splendid material in his time.

At the centre of his depiction stands the figure of the Mute Tribune, the president in *posse*, the men of the office but to maintain himself in the dignified posture of availability until it seeks him, ready to serve but innocent of all dangerous, monarchial aspiration to rule, free, moreover, from the perverting ties of party or faction. From this develops the fascinating paradox of the "back porch campaign", the Cincinnati syndrome, the acceptance of the presidential call with affected surprise, the fitting on of the presidential crown with modestly averted gaze, the pretence of amateur status maintained long after the bacon. Heale conducts his reader on an engaging exploration of this hidden high way to the White House, and depicts the accompanying process of image-making and image-selling by every device from the hagiographic biography to the campaign button. He goes on to show how two varieties of presidential timber, the military hero and the "dark horse", lend themselves particularly well to being carved into shapes with electoral appeal. From this subtle, detailed and scholarly inquiry there emerges a penetrating portrait of the kind of man Americans sought to lead them from independence to Civil War, and the kind of process they evolved for guiding his progress from Log Cabin to White House.

In all this nothing is more complex than the role of party, which Heale unravels with patience and skill. As the republic grows up, the demands for democracy mount, yet party retains its poor odour, at its best aiming at only the partial, not the general, interest, at its worst, bringing lobby and corruption, sectional selfishness and religious bigotry in its wake. Heale shows how Whigs and Democrats evolved distinctive solutions to the problem, which the idea of party presented in these circumstances, the Democrats accepting their party character but claiming that their party

comprises all the virtues and patriots that the state could require, and that outside their orbit there could be no salvation, the Whigs opting for the ultimately self-destructive alternative of "resorting to party forms to resist the idea of party". From this follows the contrast in their standard-bearers, the Whig claiming to transcend party and section and taking George Washington as his exemplar, his opponent boasting of his fidelity to the Democratic creed and following and taking as his model the figure of Andrew Jackson. To this is added the further paradox that because they were the minority party it was the Whigs who made the going in the development of party organization and its attendant hallyhoo, seeking to make up in efficiency what they lacked in mass devotion. All this and more, Heale delineates with care and elegance, drawing on a mass of contemporary material. Only one element is lacking from his broad coverage: like McCormick, but with less excuse (for "he is an Englishman"), he hardly ever sets the American phenomena which he understands so well in a comparative context, particularly in relation to British and French experience at roughly the same time. Here he might have found pointers a-plenty in the observations of European travellers on American goings-on, but alas the name Tocqueville occurs only twice in his pages and Charles Dickens at all.

"Not worth a pitcher of warm spit" - "Cactus Jack" Gurner's characterization of his Vice-Presidential office does not appear in Joel K. Goldstein's pages - it is not, after all, for a doctoral dissertation to indulge in needless denigration of its topic. In fact the main thrust of Dr Gurner's treatment begins where McCormick's experience left off, in the development of the office over the past forty to fifty years. His concern is to show how the Vice-Presidency has become in the past few decades an important part of the American political system. Of course it remains true that its ultimate importance derives from the relatively good odds that its incumbent may be called upon, at no notice, to exchange the role of heir for the throne itself. In thirty-eight presidencies the lightning (often in the form of an assassin's bullet) has struck nine times, and Goldstein makes out a convincing table of twenty other instances in which it scored a near miss.

Whodunnit in Dallas?

John Sparrow

MICHAEL L. KURTZ

Crime of the Century: The Kennedy Assassination from a Historian's Perspective
291pp. Brighton: Harvester. £12.95.
0 7108 0471 7

This book surveys the circumstances of the assassination of President Kennedy and the literature it gave rise to. It reviews in some detail the reports of the two official bodies that investigated the crime - the Warren Commission and the House Select Committee on Assassinations - and provides a selective bibliography of the seventy books and some 200 articles. Michael L. Kurtz's survey is undertaken "from a historian's perspective": it does not attempt to "say the last word" - on this mystery the last word will never be said - but it is judicious, balanced, sensible. It passes by the productions of "irresponsible muckrakers" (like those who pointed the finger of suspicion at Lyndon Johnson as an accomplice in the crime), and critics (like Mark Lane, Harold Weisberg and Sylvia Meagher) who were "incapable of distinguishing reliable evidence from speculation". The body of the book consists of a detailed examination of the evidence, followed by a chapter, "Some Questions", setting out thirty-seven crucial questions arising out of the evidence, and a final chapter, "The Warren Commission, Take for Plotters and Their Deed". In which Professor Kurtz expounds his own "Reconstruction" of the assassination. It is a fair tribute to Kurtz's

the nub, however, of his argument is that the office has grown in power for supplementary reasons. Presidents increasingly make grants of power to their undersecretaries, making them members of the Cabinet and the National Security Council, and entrusting to them more important commissions to them at home and abroad in politics and diplomacy. This in turn is linked to a change in the selection process, with the old idea of "balancing the ticket" giving way to a modern emphasis on the Vice-

President as supporter of his chief, a campaigner and trouble-shooter - indeed as an all-purpose recipient of the spill-over of a presidential office which has become impossibly demanding of its incumbent. All this, together with the current status of various notions for reforming the office (a hardy perennial), Dr Goldstein analyses with accuracy and thoroughness. His book must stand as the most comprehensive up-to-date treatment of its theme.

Harvey Oswald guilty and (my label) attempted to fabricate a case against him. Again, with regard to the conflict of evidence about the circumstances in which Oswald escaped from the scene of the murder, Kurtz asserts that "It should be obvious to the disinterested observer that the Warren Commission was trying to fabricate a case against Oswald as a lone assassin and murderer."

Further, with reference to Oswald's attempt to kill Major-General Walker in April 1963, the Warren Commission observed - surely with moderation - that this "demonstrated his disposition to take human life". Kurtz's comment on this is that "the attempt on General Walker's life is beyond the scope of this book. Obviously, [my italics] if he had been bearing on the question of whether or not Oswald shot President Kennedy over seven months later." Does he really suggest that if Oswald attempted to take human life he had occurred within, say, three months of the Kennedy assassination, that would have increased its relevance to evidence of his "disposition to take human life"?

Professor Kurtz's book is, however, likely to become a standard summary of the problem presented by the Kennedy assassination. It seems worthwhile, therefore, to record one or two points, trivial though they are, that call for the author's attention. When he is preparing a reprint, "Counsel" should be replaced by "more than half-a-dozen occasions" and "hemorrhaging" by "precipitous decision". An extremely useful set of [my italics] in determining, and a bogus group set up to deflect [my italics] attention from



The President of the United States in early acting days promoting, while wearing a black tie, cigarettes, the film Hong Kong (1951) and, more indirectly, a volume of Kipling's Collected Verse. "Oh East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet!" is, however, a sentiment confounded in person, if not political, terms by Hong Kong in which Rengam flees from evil Sino-communists with a Chinese boy who has secreted about his person a golden idol. Kipling perhaps owes his place on the table to his couplet: "A million surplus laggies are willing to bear the yoke, and a woman is only a woman, but a good Cigar is a smoke." This advertisement is included in Advertising: Reflections of a Century by Brian Holme (324pp, Heinemann. £20. 0 434 34540 7).

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The imbalance of power

Paul Johnson

ANTHONY SAMPSON

The Changing Anatomy of Britain
476pp. Hodder and Stoughton.
£9.95.
0 340 20964 X

SAMUEL H. BEER

Britain Against Itself: The Political Contradictions of Collectivism
231pp. Faber. £9.50.
0 571 11918 2

Less than twenty years ago, academic writers on politics still cited Britain as a model of what they liked to term the "civic culture". Modern British Politics (1965) by Samuel H. Beer of Harvard University asserted: "Just as Alexis de Tocqueville travelled to America in 1831 to seek the secrets of democracy, so today we might travel to England in search of the secrets of stable democracy". Today Britain is commonly seen as a model of failure: this is essentially what Professor Beer's new book is about; and Anthony Sampson, whose original Anatomy of Britain (1962) accused us of complacency, now seeks a "cure to the British post-imperial malaise".

Both the optimism of the early 1960s and the pessimism of the early 1980s were and are slightly out of date, as indeed are these two books, for 1982 has been an exceptionally busy and illuminating year for Britain. Beer presents Mrs Thatcher as someone who, like all her recent predecessors, has been forced into a U-turn, and "Thatcherism" as dead: a view which looks quaint this autumn. Sampson has struggled hard to accommodate the "Falklands Factor" in last-minute revisions. But he has still been overtaken by the news in portraying Buckingham Palace as "the most efficient" British institution: "The British car industry collapsed, corporations went bankrupt and public services went on strike, but the Palace still worked like clockwork". Did it indeed? The images both of institutions and of nations change swiftly these days, and the headlines can cruelly undermine the confident maxims of a book which has gone to press only a few weeks before.

Nevertheless it is true enough that Britain's reputation as a well-governed country declined rapidly in the 1970s, even if the elements of a revival are now being assembled. Why? Sampson sticks to his theory of complacency and resistance to change, quoting J. H. Elliott on Imperial Spain: "Heirs to a society which had over-invested in an empire, and surrounded by the increasingly shabby remnants of a dwindling inheritance, they could not bring themselves at a moment of crisis to surrender their memories and alter the antique pattern of their lives". Beer's analysis is quite different. He sees the breakdown as due to two factors: what he calls the "contradictions of collectivism", principally the failure of a socialist society to halt the wages scramble and its divisive and inflationary consequences; and a more general cultural process, termed "the collapse of deference", which has undermined all institutions and authority and produced a "fragmentation of power". Beer uses a lot of abstract academic jargon and is reluctant to deal concretely with such massive facts as trade union legal privileges (I recommend to him the 1981 HMSO publication *Trade Union Immunities*, a key document of our times). Yet I believe that his diagnosis is broadly on the right lines. It is not, as Sampson suggests, resistance to change but too much change which accelerated Britain's decline. The best way to illustrate this proposition is to examine in detail Sampson's own account of where power in Britain lies, an account which is still rooted in 1960s assumptions and is now seriously misleading.

Let us begin at the very centre, the Treasury. As Sir Lewis Namier pointed out many years ago, the essence of the English system of government, from Anglo-Norman times onwards, has been sound public finance, ultimately institutionalized in the system of

Treasury control. It is Sampson's contention that the power of the Treasury has grown: "the spiders' webs of the Treasury and the Cabinet Office were now still more centralised... the flow of power towards Whitehall and the Treasury has increased over recent years." The truth is quite the reverse. Treasury control has virtually broken down. I would date the critical moment as January 1958 when Harold Macmillan, the first of the big spenders, was able to survive unscathed the indignant resignations of his entire Treasury team. Since then it has been downhill all the way, though under Mrs Thatcher desperate and so far largely unavailing efforts are being made by a strong Treasury group of ministers to get public spending back under supervision. When I investigated the central government financial system at the end of the 1970s, I found that the auditing methods, compared with those in the United States, Canada and Australia, were grotesquely inadequate; that the Public Accounts Committee of the Commons was denied access to large areas of spending; that forty-four overburdened men were responsible for accounting for £40,000 million a year; that the staff of the Comptroller and Auditor-General was inadequate in view of the vast increase in public spending; and that the Treasury itself was overwhelmed.

These are arcane and complicated matters, tedious to describe, but immensely important; lower standards in central government finance, caused by over-rapid change in the scale and pattern of spending, are probably the biggest single cause of Britain's troubles. A book anatomizing Britain ought to have a clear description of how the system is supposed to work and why it does not. But Sampson is still mesmerized by a long-vanished Treasury paramountcy. Nor is he more impressive on spending by individual departments. He has something to say about Mrs Thatcher's welchdog, Sir Derek Reynier; but he does not deal with the far more illuminating experiences of Leslie Chapman, both in central government and at London Transport, which come closer than anything else to telling us the ugly truth about the qualitative decline in British government.

Sampson is handicapped, I suspect, by the philosophical assumptions of his own progressive opinions: they were an advantage when he first wrote in 1962, they are a source of opacity today. He is still inclined to believe that government expenditure is a good in itself, that the rise of the public, and the decline of the private, sector is to the general advantage; and that the acquisition of private wealth is antisocial. He professes himself opposed to concentrations of power, especially occult ones, but he does not seem to grasp that the changes he advocates usually produce precisely the hidden nodules of irresponsible authority which he most deplores. He complains at length, for instance, of the overweening financial muscles of the "faceless men" who run the insurance companies and pensions funds, a reiterated grievance on the Left. But how did this irresponsible concentration of power come about? It is largely due to a collectivist tax philosophy which makes it inevitable that savings will be channelled into a few institutions rather than held and controlled individually by millions of ordinary people. Sampson deals with this crucial point in a sentence; indeed he has no real analysis of British tax policy and its social and economic consequences, another big failure in his book. He cannot see that the widespread distributing of property is the best underpinning of democracy and social order, a point that eludes Beer also.

The truth is that Sampson is still imprisoned in the mental climate of the 1960s. He is obsessed with public schools, especially Eton, a King Charles head which rears itself with deafening monotony throughout the book. The fact that Old Etonians are numerous in the cabinet and the boardroom (and in Britain's jails for that matter) does not prove that Eton occupies a special place in the anatomy of British power, and that there is a hidden public school network in

operation. All it demonstrates is the truism that the rich and powerful, whose children will do well anyway, tend to send them to the best and most fashionable academics. Sampson confuses the symptom with the substance. All that he achieves is the over-simplification characteristic of Left-wing demonology. Abolish the public schools and power will return to the people! In his tables showing who controls the clearing banks, the accepting houses, the main life insurance companies and the nationalized industries, Sampson tells us which schools the chaps went to, as though this is of vital importance. Instead he might have told us how much wealth these individuals possess and what proportion of it was inherited or earned. There is a methodological point here, of course. The first category of information can be easily found in *Who's Who*, Sampson's indispensable source; the second, which actually tells us something important, requires hard-slogging research.

It is significant, I think, of the absolute obscurity of Sampson's approach that his notion of structure of power is still essentially that of a generation ago. He underplays or ignores the emergence of new centres, above all in the public sector, which has expanded enormously since 1962. To him, quango land is largely unexplored territory. He has virtually nothing to say about the race relations industry, something which did not exist in 1962 but which is now a burgeoning growth-point especially in local government and the inner cities. He has in fact little to say about the non-white component in Britain's anatomy or, for that matter, about the women's movement. He has missed the fact that "protest" is now increasingly institutionalized and publicly financed. He does not anatomize really important quangos like the Manpower Services Commission, which spends a billion pounds a year. Nor does he make much use of such key official sources as the *Survey of Firms*, *Bodies*, *List of Members of Public Boards of a Commercial Character* and *Directory of Paid Public Appointments Made by Ministers*. He is silent on the immense system of public patronage which has come into existence in the past two decades and which is one of the most prominent and objectionable features of British public life today. He writes of "interlocking directorships" and Old Etonian "tribalism" (a favourite word). But he does not tell us about a system which in 1978, for instance, gave one prominent union leader no less than thirteen quango appointments, with an academic as runner-up (eleven). There is no entry under "quango" in Sampson's index.

Equally, though Sampson deals with the expansion of the university system, he does not examine its political consequences. Since he first wrote in 1962, academia has been to a great extent radicalized, shifting the intellectual consensus in many matters markedly to the Left. Some would judge this the most important development of the past two decades, but Sampson is not interested. It is on higher education that the stereotypes of his left-liberal opinions show most clearly. The Open University, whose more blatantly Marxist courses are now under investigation by the Department of Education, is described as "a remarkable achievement", "one of the very few brand-new institutions in Britain which has held its own". A "unique achievement" whose "careful policy and its social and economic consequences, another big failure in his book. He cannot see that the widespread distributing of property is the best underpinning of democracy and social order, a point that eludes Beer also.

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place in the last quarter-century - reflects a general blindness to the way that new ideas remodel institutions. His discussion of the law, though reasonable enough so far as it goes, ignores the influence on younger lawyers of Herbert Hart's philosophy of jurisprudence and its more extreme exponents. The challenge to traditional notions of lawful behaviour has been, to be sure, less strident here than in America. But it has taken place none the less - indeed an important part of Beer's "collapse of deference". It is reflected in the rise of the Law Centres, an institution Sampson does not investigate, and has been aggravated by fundamental and ill-considered changes in the notion of jury service, another shift of power which eludes him. The deterioration of public respect for the law as it stands is analogous to the collapse of Treasury control in its practical impact on the lives of ordinary people.

Unfortunately Sampson does not deal with this last point. His section on the police is particularly subjective. They are described as "the most powerful and least accountable of any in Western Europe" on the mere assertion of Lord Girdner, not a good authority in this context. Sampson's views on the police reflect those of the untypical John Alderson, mainstream Chief Constables are dismissed as "authoritarian" or "obsessed by the danger of Marxist conspiracies" or, at best, "a very intelligent authoritarian". Once one asks the simple question how the law, which is democratically enacted, can be enforced except in an authoritarian manner one realizes the glibness of Sampson's approach. What is missing from his analysis is a discussion of perhaps the most important development of the past two decades: the impact on the police, and still more the public's relations with them, of television portrayal of police behaviour, which has been totally transformed from Jack Warner-type reassurance to the latest hostile BBC image.

Indeed Sampson consistently

understates the role of the modern media as a dissolvent of society. Of course he discusses the media at length, but in terms of old-fashioned Left-wing analysis: who is the proprietor, what institution owns the shares? The media are thus presented as an aspect of the traditional power-structure, as something that needs to be changed, "modernized", etc. Sampson does not sufficiently distinguish between ownership and control, a gap which has widened immeasurably since he first began writing. Proprietorial authority has largely collapsed under the impact of editorial prerogative reinforced by the Monopolies Commission and boards of "independent directors", the rise of a militant NUJ and the imposition of journalistic closed shops, the obstacles presented by the 1975 Employment Protection Act and NUJ rules to editorial discipline and, not least, the growth of "Media Studies" at the universities. Sampson gives little weight to these factors. He has no discussion of the relentless pressures exerted by such new institutions as the Glasgow Media Group and the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom or the growing tendency of closed-shop print unions to impose editorial censorship. All this is part of Sampson's ineradicable tendency to see power in board-room terms only; while mesmerized by Rupert Murdoch and "Tiny" Rowland (who, he correctly remarks, were the only big shots who declined to see him), he ignores novel developments lower down.

The divorce between ownership and control is, of course, still more pronounced in television. The BBC is supposedly owned by the nation but in fact firmly in the hands of a left-liberal oligarchy. The table on pages 412-3 of Sampson's book, showing the structure of independent TV suggests, and is meant to suggest, that it is the playground of big business and the Right. No one would know, from Sampson's account, that Arthur Scargill, for instance, was made boss of the miners largely through the massive

and continuous publicity he was accorded by Yorkshire TV and the BBC. Sampson rightly recognizes the re-allocation of television licences in the winter of 1980-1 was an indefensible exercise in pure patronage. He does not tell us that it constituted a marked shift to the Left. To discover the anatomy of power in British television I do not want to be told that EMI hold 50 per cent of the shares of Thames: I want to know the backgrounds of its heads of programmes and documentaries. It matters little that George Howard is "an old Etonian who went to Balliol" and owns a "vast country house". What do matter are the views of the people who run BBC current affairs and documentaries, *Pohorana, Naitonville* and so forth. Sampson is not much good for this kind of information. He does not, for instance, take us inside the power-structure of the most durable Left-wing station, Granada; he does not examine the senior personnel appointed by Jeremy Isaacs to run Channel Four. Though critical of the power wielded by traditional elites, he is sympathetic to the monopolistic claims of the unrepresentative but progressive TV elite, with their fly-blown philosophy of "public service broadcasting". He misses the point about the current debate on cable TV and other forms of expansion, which is not about quality (that is pure BBC-TV propaganda) but the freedom to publish, as Peter Jay has so eloquently insisted. Nor has he much to say about another and less developed phenomenon which has developed since 1962: the vast expansion of public-sector culture, now costing central government alone over £100 million a year, plus rising sums from local authorities, and overwhelmingly reflecting the views of a narrow-based and generally intolerant ultra-liberal elite.

If I have dwelt on Sampson's shortcomings at length and with some severity, it is a testimony to the importance I attach to the *Anatomy of Britain* and its successors. It has been

one of the most influential publishing enterprises of our time, and is in no small degree to blame for some of the destructive illusions which, as best I can see, have divided Britain against itself. As the present volume seems likely to continue the run of success, it is necessary to point out that Sampson's analysis of where power lies in Britain today is much more covertly partisan, and that the picture it presents is in many ways closer to the realities of the 1960s than to the new Britain created by the gigantism of the public sector, hyperinflation and long-term recession. Old Etonian Conspiracy Theory no longer works, it never did. If one is asked where power in Britain lies today one might be inclined to answer: everywhere - and nowhere. Power has become very widely diffused in Britain, but it is chiefly negative power: the right or ability to prevent, impede, destroy, delay and brake. The problem is how to create a superior concentration of positive and creative power, which can carry us into the twenty-first century in reasonably good shape. It is not clear in the end it may well be by a return to traditional English values and by a wholesale repudiation of the 1960s conventional wisdom which Sampson's *Anatomies* so accurately reflect.

The sixth series of 1:250,000 Ordnance Survey maps, has recently been published in a single book, *The Ordnance Survey Atlas of Great Britain* (224pp, Country Life Books, £12.95, 0 600 35005 3), together with an index of more than 32,000 place names accompanied by their National Grid reference numbers. In addition to the maps, the changing anatomy of Britain is traced in some detail in two essays by R. A. Butlin and M. J. Wise, illustrated by seventeen further maps depicting such things as the movement and changing distribution of population, the agricultural and industrial revolutions, "The Crisis of the 1930s", "Planning for Leisure" and "Cultural Diversity".

showing to what marks the male grub was expected to grow; and two inch deep honey-magazines, empty, but still magnificent; the whole gummed and glued into twisted scrap-work, ovary on the wires, half-cells, beginnings abandoned, or grandiose, weak-willed, composite cells placed out with rubbish and cepted with dirt.

This extraordinary structure is reminiscent both of an ancient Indian ruin and the Bodleian Library: it is a piece of sacred architecture and perfected culture which the ancestral side of Kipling's imagination reveres even as his ruthlessly progressive commitment welcomes the cleansing of the hive. In a brusque switch of tone he adds: "Good or bad, every inch of it was so riddled by the tunnels of the Wax-moth that it broke in clouds of dust as it was flung on the heap." This is what is meant by saying "1919 is dead" and it has something of the destructive joy which can be felt in so many of Yeats's poems. A joy that is pushed so far it eventually prays for its creative opposite: "O honey-bees, Come build in the empty house of the stars". Significantly, this prayer for form and honey issued from a state of civil war and for the patriotic or traditional Tory the art of government lies in avoiding the civil disorder which follows from polarization.

The possession of a conservative temperament has very little to do with actual politics and it is perfectly possible for someone to have a natural affection for rats and changeable backwaters without voting for a party that believes in the status quo. My own experience of growing up in an inert and timid conservative state which then disintegrated into tragic violence has made me incapable of ever voting Tory. However, I have to recognize that while the imagination depends for its dangerous thrills on a dedicated and innovative urgency, it ultimately draws on those ancestral admonitions which too many non-conservatives ignore. On the other hand, the dullness of most of the contributors to this anthology, its drab and lacklustre design, and Mr Kirk's complacently undistinguished prose inspire neither confidence nor respect.

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Andrew Saint

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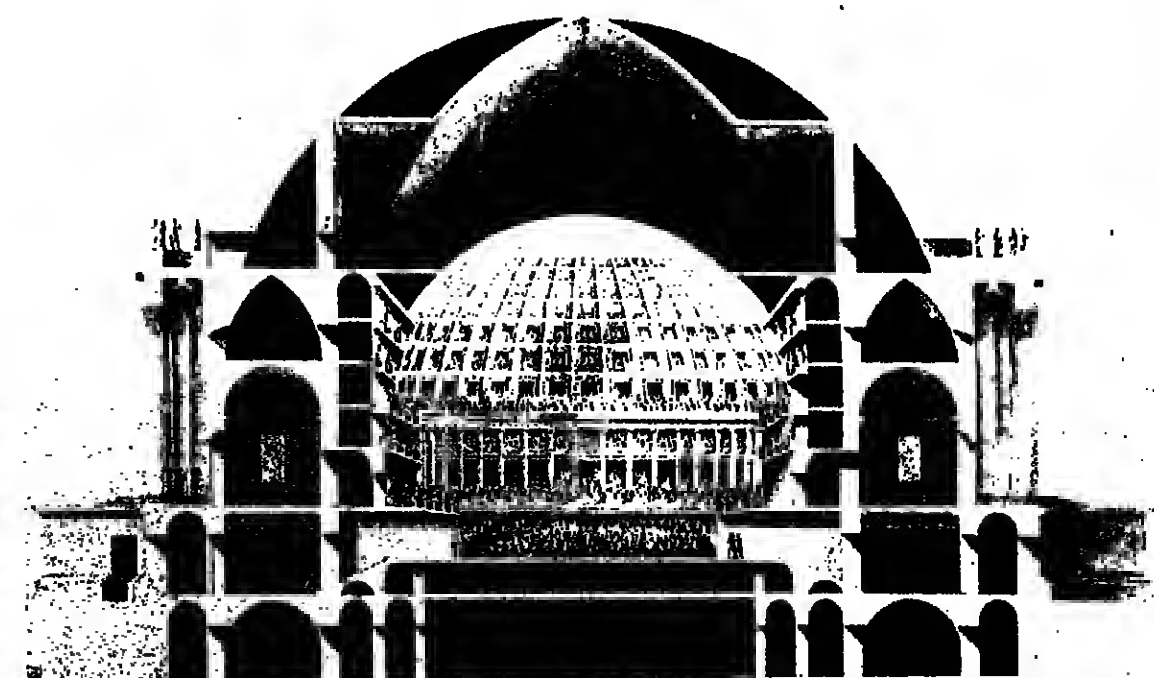
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Having bequeathed their past to professional historians, architects now do not write in as much depth as they once did about their history. Here are two very erudite exceptions. At first sight they could hardly differ more. Joseph Rykwert, our leading architectural scholar in Britain today, has collected a set of essays which range easily and cleverly over a vast plain of artistic enquiry; by contrast Demetri Porphyrios contributes a jargon-laden study centred upon a single architect, Alvar Aalto. Yet the books are linked by a common purpose which lifts them above the drudgeries of the workaday historian - the urge to advance the contemporary theory and practice of design through a broader understanding of "meaning" in architecture.

In the broadest of terms, the gospel which the two authors preach is the same. It is neatly encapsulated in Rykwert's title: *The Necessity of Artifice*. Architects and designers, the authors agree, must extend themselves beyond what is just rational or functional or scientific. But however they press their case, extra elements which we call art, it must be deeply conceived, humanely ordered and subtly revealed. Set forth thus, the idea is a mere platitudinous symptom of the forces luring today's architects away from the once limpid-seeming waters of Modern-Movement ideology to the richer but darker pools of artistic theory. It is in the manner of this idea's development that the books' merits lie.

Joseph Rykwert's eighteen essays cover a span going back twenty-five years; almost all attempt to move forward from this "core" position in a similar direction. This consistency, more perhaps than the quality of any individual essay, is what makes his book impressive. To see Rykwert's approach to the puzzle of meaning in architecture regularly deployed with depth and erudition is both fascinating and rewarding. Very properly, the general lines of what he has to say are laid out in the first essay, an early piece entitled "Meaning and Building". Surveying modern architecture from the standpoint of the late 1950s, when the first cracks in the façade of rationalist theory were starting to show, the author urges designers to attend to "memory and association" and instill into their work the significance which psychologists and anthropologists say lies hidden in familiar objects. Not, he adds, that architects should manipulate these symbols as does the advertising industry; rather, they should be used to "make every building an integrating, reconciling and cleansing form".

This European (one might say Warburgian) obsession with hermetic, beneficial meanings in architectural form pervades Rykwert's historical writings as well as his purer "think pieces". A typical essay, allusive but charming, muses upon a passage in Vitruvius which most readers pass over as childish on the evolution of the Corinthian order, to make the point that architectural elements which may seem formal and stale often have rich, half-perceived cultural resonances. Another piece inveighs against the much-admired French classicists Boullée and Durand from a similar position. In reducing the language of architecture to mere elements and shapes, argues Rykwert, they impoverished it, and made it ossified and meaningless - the kind of symbolism embodied in Boullée's fantasies is rigidly geometrical and leaves nothing to the unconscious. A third essay, "So the early or 'dark'



A section of Etienne-Louis Boullée's plan for a "Salle d'Opéra" in Paris. Few of his projects, conceived with the inflexible laws of nature in mind, ever got past the watercolour stage - like the vast, spherical "Cenotaph to Newton". Reproduced from *The Necessity of Artifice*, reviewed here.

period of the Bauhaus, upholds the speculative teaching methods practised by the garlic-chewing Johannes Itten against the technological heresies which increasingly overtook the school after 1923.

Rykwert's heroes are those who have wrestled most closely with this business of meaning in architecture. That is to say, he admires most not so much those who have defined the concept in a particular way and then expressed it clearly, like Gottfried Semper, who earns a scholarly but not specially sympathetic essay, as those for whom the significance of architectural form was a continuing enigma. Chief among the latter are the Viennese architect Adolf Loos and the eighteenth-century Venetian friar Carlo Lodoli, each of whom is honoured with an essay. In either case Rykwert is less concerned to endorse or even fully interpret their views (given the fragmentary sources, this would be an impossibility for Lodoli),

than to induce his reader to struggle with the self-same problems of representation, ornament and meaning.

This crusade for due attention to meaning in architectural form is carried through with immense versatility, in essays ranging from primitive anthropology to the latest piece of chic at the Italian Biennale. One hesitates to call too crude a halt to so entertaining an enterprise. Nevertheless the coarser reader cannot help but ask: is any of this brilliant but often esoteric history of assistance to architects? What tangible advice is Rykwert really offering?

The short essay which gives the book its title mainly recapitulates "Meaning and Building", but is also the only one to go beyond it, by offering as a preliminary task for architects the restoration of some form of common "syntax" in architectural language. The thought is left hanging in the air, but it does not take much to see its

limitations. Our culture is too quick-moving for the unconscious meanings to which Rykwert is addicted to be satisfactorily generated; and it is too heterogeneous to suffer the imposition of a conscious, unified language of form of the type represented by the classical tradition of architecture. Architects lack the social authority to perform such tasks; they have other more urgent and more mental ones to do. No doubt their work has a "meaning", but it will be vain to seek it merely in the outward forms which they employ.

The quest for a grander, more dignified philosophy of meaning for today's intellectually inclined architect to cherish, adrift as he is in the shallows of post-modernism, also informs Porphyrios's *Sources of Modern Eclecticism*. Porphyrios's chances of pertinence are perhaps better than Rykwert's, because he confines himself to the plight of the twentieth-century architect. Yet his field of vision

is too narrow to offer all that much consolation, since his book concentrates upon a single architect, Alvar Aalto. It is not a monograph (of those there have been several already), but a work of theory centred upon the achievement of the great Finn. According to his assistant Karl Fleig, Aalto loathed theorizing, unswerving all such enquiries with the words "I build". But since Aalto also said "with every construction I write ten volumes of philosophy", to use him as a jumping-off point of departure seems fair enough.

Aalto's architecture, as is often observed, remained complex and expressive in a manner unique among accepted "masters" of the Modern Movement. Some of this came from the traditions of Scandinavian culture and building, which Porphyrios has studied thoroughly and illustrates helpfully. But it was also in great part the fruit of a very subtle and humane personal enterprise in architecture. The author's purpose boils down to a simple one: to encourage architects nurtured on the rigidities of the Beaux Arts and orthodox modernism to emulate Aalto's broad and imaginative sense of how buildings may be ordered and planned, and so to invest them with a richer end deeper meaning.

So far, so very good. What is wretched is the laboriousness with which this task is carried through. We endure "heterotopia" (cheers!) versus "homotopia" (groan!), "onomatopoeic and metaphoric modes of signification" (hurray!), the "aesthetic, scientific and ethical valorization of nature" (muted foot-shuffling); and architecture as "disinterested *senso* in search of a touch of culture" (gasps of respect). Who is going to read this dismal stuff? Underneath the verbiage it is all intelligent, deeply researched and well intended, but it is not going to gain any converts to Aalto's admirable approach to design. Unless, of course, one is cynical and concludes that a self-perpetuating conspiracy of architects and other writers exists who will only take each other seriously, if they were what are relatively simple thoughts, the turgid, academic vocabulary, such people cannot speak plainly with words, how can they convey their meaning in the infinitely more absurd and more exciting medium of building?

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Openings on to the unknown

Peter Fawcett

MARCEL SCHWOB

Chroniques
Edited by John Alden Oreen
210pp. Geneva: Droz.

The King in the Golden Mask and Other Writings
Selected, translated and introduced by Iain White
186pp. Manchester: Carcanet New Press. £6.95.

Like the archetypal Symbolist writer in Gide's *Paludes*, Marcel Schwob lived cooped up in two tiny rooms in the Rue de l'Université and dreamed of faraway places. Occasionally he dressed up as a Stevensonian pirate and struck fear into the hearts of passengers on cross-Channel steamers. The furthest he ever went was to visit Stevenson's tomb in the Pacific, but he was sn on arrival that he had to turn back without even setting foot on Samoan soil.

Of all the young writers who burst upon the French literary scene in the early 1890s, he was one of the strangest and most interesting. The son of a provincial newspaper-owner, he came to Paris in 1882 to complete his education. In 1889 he published his first story in *L'Echo de Paris*, and two years later was invited by Carle Mendès to join him in the editorship of its new literary supplement.

He was, it was said, phenomenally intelligent. Reputed to have been fluent in English and German by the time he was three, he came top of the list of *licenciés* in 1889. He studied philology and Greek palaeography at the École des Hautes Études, and did research into Villon and the language of the Quignards under Auguste Longnon at the Archives Nationales. In 1889 he published an *Étude sur l'argot français*, written in collaboration with his colleague Georges Guyeysse who committed suicide before it appeared.

His physical appearance was the cue for much comment. Extremely short, fat and ugly, he shaved his head almost bald, provoking one contemporary to describe him as being like a hard-boiled egg without its shell. Wherever he went, he carried a book stuffed in his pocket, from which he gave impromptu after-dinner readings, his "plut" as he called it, anything from Tacitus to Whitman. His apartment, sandwiched between two floors, was crowded with books and manuscripts, and the mirror was covered over with papers so that he should not catch sight of himself unweary.

His own first book, *Cœur double*, appeared in 1891. It was a collection of stories, all previously published elsewhere, preceded by a preface in which it was explained that the stories were arranged in a particular order to illustrate the development of man from the egoistic emotion of terror to the altruistic feeling of pity. The preface also launched in France the concept, borrowed from Stevenson, of a "roman d'aventures", which was to bear such fruit eventually in Rivière's famous *Contes* in 1913.

The stories themselves are masterpieces of the genre, after the manner of Poe. Stevenson and Mark Twain, Schwob believed that, permitted ordinary society, there existed in underworld community which it was necessary to get to know in order to understand the true character of an age. This, together with his self-confessed "goût de la criminalité", explains his lifelong interest in Villon. Although he became irate when others declared that Villon could not be a thief, he himself, indeed, was a thief, he himself, indeed, was a thief, he himself, indeed, was a thief.

His love of Stevenson dated from his reading of *Treasure Island* during a train-journey to the Midi. He wrote the first of his four articles on Stevenson in August 1888 and sent it, together with an admiring letter, to his publisher, from whom he heard that Stevenson was "yaching in the Pacific". Nevertheless, a correspondence was struck up between them, which lasted

until Stevenson's death in 1894. What Schwob particularly admired about Stevenson was what he called his "réalisme irréel", exemplified in such phrases as the description of Long John Silver "with his face as big as a ham". No man has a face as big as a ham, wrote Schwob. It was a similar hallucinatory quality that he sought in his own writing.

Cœur double was followed in 1892 by a further collection of stories, *Le Roi au masque d'or*. Schwob also believed that there was only one thing left for the writers of his generation to do after their elders, "bien écrire". Nearly all his stories, therefore, have their source in his erudition and they aspire to the status of myth. His aesthetic theories were opposed to the kind of novel being written by Zola or Bourget. He thought that art was about to enter a new period of synthesis, following one



Marcel Schwob drawn by Theodore Steiner-Simon in 1900 (?) the frontispiece of the 1920 edition of Schwob's collection of stories *Le Roi au Masque d'or* (Les Éditions G. Cres).

of analysis, and that form would become more important than content. A novel of adventures, for him, was an account of the successive coincidences between the crises of the internal world of human beings and the external world of events, and *Hamlet* was its modern archetype.

Aside from his own writings, Schwob had a considerable influence on a number of his contemporaries. He was Claude's closest confidant for a while before the trainee-consul left for America, and he encouraged him to start translating Aeschylus. He became the dedicatee of Valéry's *Introduction à la méthode de Léonard de Vinci*. He introduced Claude to philology and to Ibsen, and published Valéry's first works in the supplement to *L'Echo de Paris*.

In 1893 he published *Miner*, an exquisite series of sketches of the artist in the British Museum, and earned himself a salutary warning from Stevenson in his last letter to him from the same: "You have yet to give us - and I am expecting it with impatience - something of a larger gall; something delectable, net twill; something with the colours of life, not the flat tints of a temple illumination".

It was this, in a sense, that Schwob was unable to give. Since before 1891, he had had as his mistress the little working-class girl he knew as his "petite Vse chérie". When she died from tuberculosis in December 1893, he was heartbroken. He let his hair grow to form a "petit sautoir pleureur" described, "according with 'l'état actuel de son âme triste'". His best-known work, *Le Livre de Monelle*, is a tribute to her memory, though even this is no more than a collection of renamed stories with the first chapter, "Paroles de Monelle", serving as a preface to the rest. Remy de Gourmont would point out that the preface had "no application inevitable" to the stories and that "il a couru le risque, par conséquent, de ses imaginations par ses raisonnements".

Claude was later accused of plagiarizing *Le Livre de Monelle* in *Les Nouvelles*. However, a correspondence was struck up between them, which lasted

between the opening sections of the two books, they stand on either side of a major divide, *Monelle* looking back to the Symbolist mist of Symbolism, whereas *Les Nouvelles* pulsates with the vibrant life of the future.

In 1895 Schwob underwent the first in a succession of major abdominal operations which effectively marked the end of his creative career. Thereafter he lived supported by his companion, the young Jewish actress Marguerite Moreno, whom he married in 1900, and after the Paris Exhibition the same year, attended by a Chinese manservant, Ting, with whom he made the ill-fated voyage to Samoa.

However, perhaps the most interesting of his works for the modern reader was published only in 1896. This was *Vies Imaginaires*, a series of spoof biographies ranging historically from the self-styled divinity Empedocles and the Ephesian fire-raiser Erostratus to the illustrious pair of body-snatchers, Burke and Hare. The art of biography, according to Schwob, consisted not in the pursuit of truth, but in the creation of unique and individual form. For too long it had been the preserve of historians, who believed we wanted to know only about the lives of the great, and thereby deprived us of the possibility of some remarkable portraits. He himself deliberately chose subjects about whom little or nothing was known, such as the Jacobean dramatist Cyril Tourneur. Ben Jonson appears merely as an extra in the life of the actor Gabriel Spenser. While admiring the idiosyncratic techniques of John Aubrey, Schwob attempted to refine them with the formal skill of a Hokusai, who believed he would be 110 before he reached the perfection of his art. In the imagined life of Petronius it is even possible to detect a hint of self-portraiture. With its mixture of fact and fantasy, *Vies Imaginaires* is, along with *Spicé*, a collection of essays and prefaces also published in 1896, the most satisfying of Schwob's collected works.

As he grew older, he became increasingly bed-ridden and difficult. Many of his former friends deserted him. Valéry quarrelled with him over a photograph of Colonelie Raimond even began to question his intelligence. In 1900 Sarah Bernhardt performed his translation of *Hamlet*, but has since come in for some heavy criticism on account of his megalomaniacal. By the time of his death in 1905, at the age of thirty-seven, his style of literature had fallen into disrepute to be replaced by a more natural and spontaneous kind of writing. One who knew him only in his last few years, Paul Léautaud, admired him as a man but found his work "triqué au possible". At his funeral Alfred Jarry, who had dedicated *Ubu Roi* to him and had worn a pair of Raimond shoes to Mallarmé's funeral, removed his trousers from his socks as a final mark of respect.

Schwob's memory was preserved after his death by his widow and by his disciple, Pierre Champion, who in the 1920s produced two rather hagiographic studies of him and then, between 1927 and 1930, in collaboration with Marguerite Moreno, ten volumes of *Œuvres complètes*. In 1979 Hubert Juin made the essential Schwob available again in three volumes in 10/18. Borges is one of the modern writers who shows signs of his influence, and Michel Raimond has described him as "le plus intelligent des conteurs de la génération symboliste".

It is doubtful if the volume *Chroniques* will do much to enhance his reputation. John Alden Green has for many years been collecting Schwob memorabilia at the Brigham Young University and is a leading authority on his subject. He demonstrates convincingly that, throughout most of his life, Schwob was contributing daily anonymous "lettres parisiennes" to his father's newspaper, *Le Phare de la Loire*, a selection of which are reprinted here. They are, on the whole, as ephemeral as their form suggests. In the first half of the volume, a number of little-known texts are published, including the early article *Dromes* mentioned to George de la Selve (Droz, 1969). There is a

hint that a third section was originally envisaged - potentially the most interesting - containing some of Schwob's unpublished correspondence.

It seems a pity that the same title should have been chosen as the already given to a volume of *Œuvres complètes* and also intended for Hubert Juin's proposed fourth volume. There are a number of irritating misprints, and Professor Green's annotations vary both in usefulness and in their accuracy. The Payne who translated Villon, for example, was not John Howard Payne (1791-1852), the actor and dramatist to be found in the pages of *Encyclopædia Britannica*, but John Payne (1802-1916), the poet described in the British Library catalogue as "author of *The Mask of Shadows*".

Iain White makes much of the Burges connection in the introduction to his translation of a comprehensive selection of Schwob's stories under the title *The King in the Golden Mask*, reminding us, for example, that Victoria Ocampo, who in 1931 founded the *Journal Sur*, received lessons in French diction from Marguerite Moreno, in exile in Buenos Aires, and that Borges himself translated Schwob's "Burke and Hare" for the literary supplement of the *Buenos Aires paper Critica*. The way titles in *A Universal History of Infamy* have a Schwobian ring - "The Widow Ching, Lady Pirate", "Monk Eastman, Purveyor of Iniquities" - and so on.

Schwob is not easy to translate. The extreme concision of his style, which strikes one at times as being as much the result of journalistic constraints as artistic choice, makes for occasional difficulties in comprehension. While, who seems to share his author's fondness for unusual words - "adumbration" and "excepiable" both appear in his introduction - has produced translations which on the whole are accurate and flow smoothly, I noted only one obvious gallicism.

The title-story, on which Claude probably drew for *Le Repos de septième jour*, is one of Schwob's longest and most impressive fables, recounting the tale of the last of the masked kings who discovers he is a lapidary and, having blinded himself with his mask and renounced his kingdom, is miraculously cured, without his knowledge, before he dies. There is a suggestion here of redemption through suffering which is a feature of much of Schwob's work. The other stories from *Cœur double* and *Le Roi au masque d'or* demonstrate the range of his writing, set in anything from neolithic times to the present, including in "Train 981" his eerie account of the coming of the dreaded blue cholera from Marseilles to Paris in 1865. Each is, in the words of another unsettling train-story, "The Veiled Man", "a lurid opening on to the unknown".

The morbid slant of Schwob's imagination is well in evidence in this selection, but the last two stories from *Vies Imaginaires*, "Major Stock Bonnet, pirate by vagary" and "Burke and Hare, murderers", regarded by many as his masterpiece, are also fine examples of his ironic humour. The volume ends with a complete work, the very short *Children's Crusade* (1896), described by Gourmont as "un petit livre miraculeux" and set to music using Schwob's libretto, by Pierre J. 1902.

Nothing is included from *Le Livre de Monelle* on the somewhat specious grounds that "it must be taken as a whole" and "defies the anthology scissors". The argument is hardly acceptable in view of the way in which it was pasted together in the first place. Nor is White correct in suggesting that Schwob's popularity in the French-speaking world is such as to have kept his writings in print for over eighty years. There have been long periods when the reverse has been true.

It is good to have so much Schwob available in English at last. He was a good friend to English literature, and Bennett and Gosse were among those who visited his "salon" on the Ile Saint-Louis at the start of the century. Nevertheless, nearly eighty years after his death, a proper assessment of his work and influence, in any language, is still awaited.

Disliking and dissenting

Claude Rawson

DONALD DAVIE

These Companions: Recollections 176pp. Cambridge University Press. £12.50. 0 521 24511 7

Disseult Voice: The Ward-Phillips Lectures for 1980

154pp. University of Notre Dame Press. £11. 0 268 00852 3

These *Companions*, Donald Davie's autobiographical memoir, takes its title and epigraph from Pound's *Pisan Cantos*:

Lordly men are to earth o'ergiven
these companions:
Forde that wrote of giants
and William who dreamed of nobility
and Jim the comedian singing:
"Barney castle me darlin'
you're nothing now but a
STOWNE"

The idiom was one which the early modern masters, not only Pound but also Yeats, fashioned for the celebration of coterie friendships, witty, affectionate and (where appropriate) nostalgic. Its antecedents probably go back to the Renaissance. They include some memorable lines from the circle of Swift and Pope, and Goldsmith's "Retaliation" is a backhanded variant from a later eighteenth-century coterie. The style is not confined to verse: Yeats's *Autobiographies* is full of passages which parallel the stanzas of "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory" and other poems about Yeats's friends. There is often an upsurge of glow or high heroic note ("Lordly men are to earth o'ergiven"), which contains or transcends some affectionately remembered fallibilities and comic lapses, contributing a poignant mythology of greatness and loss.

Davie's autobiography, though it invokes Pound's precedent, does not live up to these associations and perhaps was not meant to. Any parallel can only be ironic, though I suspect not irony was intended either, just an unfocused gesture. The book does not affect heroic accents. It is rather short on wit and affection. And Davie's friendships do not seem to have been of the coterie sort anyway. His membership of the Movement was perhaps the exception, and the Movement, in its public face at least, was a rather different kind of group. Its

members may have been close personal friends, but their group-identity was that of a common public image rather than of friendships which were in any deep or striking sense the subject of their writings. Blake Morrison's recent study shows that although they sometimes assumed their readers to be "confined to what Amis called 'a circle of intimates' and Davie a 'coterie of personal friends and other poets'", they were ambiguous in their feelings about this, disliking in particular the arrogant exclusiveness of the Modernist or Poundian stance. Both by temperament and on principle, they shied from the self-mythologizing grandeur, the evocation of proud convivialities of intellect and art and wit, which are the subject of Yeatsian or Poundian reminiscence.

In any case, the Movement appears very little in this highly selective record, either as a group in its own right or as an episode in Davie's life-story. The few apocryphal references to "such comrades of 'The Movement'" as Kingsley Amis and Philip Larkin are really about individuals, and where Davie sees a lingering group-ethos, eg. of Little Englandism, he tends to dissociate himself from it. His Russian experience and his love of Italy convey a sense of wider sympathies. Both are attractively covered in this book. They come under a moving evocation of how Mandelstam, "hounded by Stalin in the 1930s", clung to "Dante and Ariosto, obscurely comforting himself by the assurance that the waters of his own Black Sea flowed into and out of the Mediterranean". Not for the first time, however, a sensitive insight is mixed up with, and devalued by, a self-regarding and fretful hysteria, which ends up by insulting the memory of the Russian poet. For Davie sees himself as similarly turning to "the images of individuality that were created... by the masterful artificers of Renaissance Italy", in the face of a neo-Stalinist menace which presses upon him, abetted by a conspiracy of socialists and knee-jerk liberals. The latter sentiment has shades, more or less, with some old Movement associates. That being so, he might do better to leave such talk to Robert Conquest, who is more knowledgeable, or Kingsley Amis, who is more amusing.

Davie probes the Companions. Of Amis: "There is no [contemporary] British writer... whom I have admired more", but the fact is a matter

of "constraint" between them. On Larkin: "I yield to hardly anyone in my admiration of Philip Larkin's poetry". That precision hardly hardly goes naturally with yielding to nobody: it sounds both like protesting too much and taking it back. The reservations when not with a genial warmth of friendly acceptance, as in Pound's lines ("William who dreamed of nobility"), but pinched and often sour. Of Douglas Brown, his closest friend: "behind... the self-effacing doddiness of Douglas's dress and even his demeanour, the personality was authoritarian, even predatory", and Davie cannot remember him laughing. Curtis Bradford the Yeats scholar is evoked with the following access of elegiac affection: "Willow Curtis Bradford... why is it that even now, when I summon from the past his clean-shaven face that only at the darkest quarters seemed to have profited from the defeat plastic surgery, still he is able to put me out of countenance?" Most revealing of all is the comment on an officer from the days of Davie's war-service. "One must reserve a special dislike for such as him", which conceals the idea that dislike is routine but that special dislike is for special cases.

There is often about such passages a suggestion of grudge lovingly nurtured. A relentless obsession with the figure of F. R. Leavis, a formative influence, "venerated", feared and resented, who to this day preys like a ghastly ogre on Davie's irascible spirit, is the most spectacular instance. Hardly a page goes by without some reference to him, full of painful self-definition in relation to the dreaded shade, until we come up against the disclosure that lurking beneath it all was Leavis's admittedly graceless rejection of a Davie poem: "I resented the discourtesy... I resent it still, and if I am new less than fair to Leavis and to Scrutiny, I have my reasons".

The best portraits from Davie's adult life are perhaps those of his Dublin years (Joseph Hone, Austin Clarke), of the Yantis Summer School at Sligo (T. R. Henn and the formidable Mrs. Henn), of Yvor Winters and the Polish scholar Wladislaw Ladam in California. End of a preposterous Cambridge conversation between C. S. Lewis and F. R. Leavis in which these "illustrious antagonists" agreed (if on nothing else) "that there could not be in any serious sense universities on American soil because... the United States was not the heart of Russia" by going into town.

about this sentiment, but its exquisite absurdity triumphs as comedy.

This is one of the few glimpses of Davie's years as a Cambridge don, and there is little or nothing of his subsequent career: of the University of Essex, except for a few sour asides; of Stanford and Vanderbilt Universities; of *PN Review*. By contrast there are some wondrous early chapters, from pre-academic days, two of them about naval service in Arctic Russia in the war. Some of the best memories are of places rather than people: the streets of Archangel; Murmansk, knocked out by bombing-raids; "a town of enormous vistas... full of the blank shine of beaten snow muted and dimmed under the leaden skies"; its "life raw and unformed, the life of a low frontier, a mushroom town of the gold rush in the Yukon or California"; and especially the bizarre of the "never-setting sun" in Polymarno in summer.

I rose at night and went out of the shuttered cabin, to find the sun still blazing on the rocks and the winnery bushes. In the mornings I walked about, napping a world refreshed; and then recalled that it was not, as I was, just waking. The world turned round no more. I hung there, stopped by a finger. In the ruddy evenings, if I went downhill, mandolines were playing from the honeycombed houses; the music was mournful, unearthly.

"Behind Archangel itself there lay a continent" and Davie picked up in this Arctic remoteness a wider imagination of Russia, of "small dusty towns in remote and slumberous provinces"; or "the mud, black against thawing snow in churned alley-ways, where Maxim Gorky's savage merchants sweated it out at the ikons, burst in upon the gypsy girls, or leaped from log to log into the turbid river, breaking up a fortune at a whim"; or "the lonely self-maimed beggar, self-styled pilgrim", grinning and crying to the steps.

These were literary images "out of Oorly and Gogol and Chekhov, Leskov and Dostoevsky", called up to enhance or to put flesh on what he saw. He notes with a fine awareness how they also supplanted or suppressed from view some wartime realities ("a girl who had given fifteen blood-transfusions to get additional bread-coupons") which his mess-mates could experience more directly, getting "to the heart of Russia" by going into town.

The understanding does him honour and deserves no self-rebuke. What he saw or imagined was a part of the truth, closed to his messmates. He also writes attractively of one or two Russian homes he visited; of the camaraderie among servicemen, and the friendships and tensions between them and the local population; and (to particularly rich evocation) of literary conversations with Russian ladies, triggered by his reading of "Russian novels, in translation from the Club library", rituals in which, "in the sacred name of *kultura*... the names of Pushkin, Scott, Sholokhov, Jack London were recited to and fro like tennis-balls".

Humour end fondness and a quiet unfussy interplay of quotidian and literary experience inform the narrative. Davie never, on his own account, mastered the language to his satisfaction. Hearing people "speaking a language I cannot command" is a keynote of later encounters with Russian people and books. But the Russian experience survived and enriched his later life as a writer and teacher. The versions from Pasternok and the Polish of Mickiewicz (*The Forest of Lithuania* is a masterpiece of delicate poignancy) and the shipping of a controverted and imaginative literature alylaba at Essex (briefly recounted not in this book but in *Dissenting Voice*) are part of the legacy.

In those days, Davie had a Russian girl-friend and several of his mates had Russian sluts. He perhaps already thought of himself as a "brig" (a character he was later to take some pride in, first in a "fervent and militant" way and then in some specially honific senses of the term which he devised to fit his own case), but he didn't yet know himself to be a "prude". It is only recently that he has come out of that particular closet. "I am, and have always been - let's face it - a prude... Let me admit, after nearly sixty years, what I have never considered: namely, that I have used to be *disfranchised* by the *explicitness* of D. H. Lawrence (Davie's italics and quotation marks) and that many recent writers make him physically ill. This is what... I expect to feel (and am seldom proved wrong) whenever, exhausted end looking only for relaxation, I pick up a novel by a contemporary. Edna O'Brien is one instance that I have experienced, out of doubtless many more, and more

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commentary

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thing makes Allen, more, satirical than the chimes of being so profoundly pessimistic, as the filmmakers he admires. His comedy then becomes a peculiar switchback of the nihilizing and the self-asserting, dying in one breath the aesthetic promise that is launching into the next. In *A. M. Bernstein* Spill's comedy, this has the effect of making an already harsh laugh-between-the-teeth and content, between people, and contemporary humor, between the intellectual frame and the subject, differing over the intellectual positions. He has, to begin with, not been emulated by Bergman, but Bergman has the plot in a running gag, *Smiles of a Summer Night*, 1955, in which four sets of couples, of varying ages and social positions, are mixed and matched during a twenty-four-hour sojourn at the turn-of-the-century. Allen has relocated *A. M. Bernstein* (New York), reduced the numbers to three couples, but most significantly has dispensed with the setting in order to play off the

Alady Capp is a musical derived by Trevor Peacock, with music by Alan Price, from a cartoon in the *Daily Mirror* which has won world-wide popularity. It is directed in London by Graham Murray, of the Manchester Royal Exchange Company, and it is an extraordinary and rather endearing entertainment which does not fulfil what is promised in the prospectus of the first two songs. For the scene is set among the pubs and back-to-back houses of the North of England, where unemployment is at its height. Alady Price, staggered in a plane at the corner of the opening of the show, when he tells of a native who had wandered elsewhere, returning home to find a kind of desolation, the second scene shows a huddle of unemployed, shivering together for warmth in the bleak northern weather, and singing, "We're waiting, we're waiting - we're waiting for a hundred years from now - we're waiting for our jobs, our jobs, our jobs."

"After that, all this is thrown aside,
 the poverty, the degradation, the
 misery are at once forgotten, and
 the good Pub opens, the characters
 enter the street from the back-to-
 back houses, and we are immediately
 in a land."
 "Where the Seagulls are forgotten
 and the Bucktons are no more."
 "The British People, weary of
 the hour, exhausted of Shakespeare,
 of an Empire on which the sun
 never sets, have settled for a mediocre
 mediocrity as the American journalist,
 the writer of the *Washington*
Post, Fitzgerald said he would
 be satisfied with a *Lost of Bread*
 and the *Boys-A Lark of Wine*.
 "Then the demands have been
 produced. Having said they had
 a kind of profession, all that
 the Cap wants is a mug of beer, a
 a stone friend, a racing, a
 a wife whom he can bash about,
 marvellously, shaking legs, and
 a good way, beyond his limits."

[illegible]

In the event, they were fairly flexible, as they would need to be in an age when the censor was all powerful. True, in the case of *Macbeth* and of *Otello* he proved a stickler for historical authenticity, if only out of reverence for "Signor Guglielmo". He wanted *La traviata* played in modern dress—"truly a subject for our age", he wrote to a friend—but he was overruled; and the action was put back to the eighteenth century.

himself in the 1760s. For while Reynolds was advocating idealism and the general form as the basis of great art, Wright at times seemed to be aerutinizing the world around him as if minute descriptive would make it give up the secret of its nature. Indeed this was the common belief of the dynamic, rationalist milieu in which Wright chose to live. Many of his friends and patrons, resolutely unsmart Midlands men like Erasmus Darwin and Richard Arkwright, were busy making the nineteenth century out of the science and technology of the eighteenth. The drawings for "The Orrery" and "An Experiment in the Air Pump" do not survive. But these pictures must have begun with the same kind of accurate pen and wash studies of scientific apparatus as Wright made for the industrial machinery in "An Iron Forge" (the oil as well as the drawings can be seen at Darby). These studies, like the drawings of the interior of a glass-blowing factory, are virtually unique artistic records of the early stages of the industrial revolution and they already have the dramatic and idealizing qualities of the romantic illumination which gave the finished oils such potency. As a woman and as

Wright's greatest pictures, the religious and industrial canvases, were painted in the studio in New York. He spent the summers working in the mountains of Italy. When at last he made this customary journey in 1774 he was fortified by an artist of established reputation. His experience did not have any particularly happy effect on his art and yet it is easy now to underestimate the elasticity of his many routine drawings. The antique sculpture, Flaxman lent him, passed into contour drawing. But Wright simply wanted to record information for future use. He was not concerned with the significance of the picture, he admitted from the drawings as he drew. He was a man of the future, he admired and drew what was conventionally admired and doggedly followed the course from the Baroque to the Dying Gaul. His etimudism was not a just a little of that uncertainly between grand things which let erid be called on the poet Heyley to placidly refer to his Grouze in a series of slender literary picture pictures. But the southern light clearly fascinated Wright. A group of his drawings of Roman ruins are, in the way of painting, reminiscent of the Dutchman Breenbergh, another northerner who went south and

which was primarily painted by Wright in Rome when the memory was still so fresh of the strains the eighteenth-century concept of the sublime in the direction of Turner's visions of an uncontrollable nature. But though the work was too violent to find a buyer, Wright's lifetime it seems very contrived now. As Wright repeated what became a favourite theme and the picture became more remote from the original experience his Vesuvius paintings slipped into pink and red picture-making.

Picture-making was largely what was done, and continued after the statue from Rome. His vent from strength strength is a portraitist, tied to the reality of his alters, but except in his earliest days he seems to have worked straight on to the canvas and there are no studies for his splendid landscapes. His subject pictures caught the neo-classical disease and though Verelst has a number from the early watercolours of Dove from the first of the 1780s the fact that Wright began to use Alexander Cozens's technique as an aid to landscape invention is an indication of the degeneration which the creative impulse weakened and convention replaced by observation.

Jonathan Barnes
The influence of Aristotle, the prince of philosophers, on the intellectual history of the West, is second to none

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to the editor

Hannah Arendt

Sir, - As an example of inuendo, Ernst Gellner's review of Elisabeth Young-Bruehl's biography of Hannah Arendt (August 6) would be quite amusing if it were not totally off the mark. We presume that he tried his hand at parody and failed.

Ernst Gellner reviews Arendt's complex writings, stretching over many years, from one central assumption: Arendt represented the kind of German Romanticism that culminated in the extermination of the Jews. Although he objects to "phenomenological history" in Arendt, he indulges himself in the kind of large-scale generalizations that have long given "intellectual history" a bad name: "the Enlightenment", "directly or by reaction", has killed the Jews. Has it?

Arendt's episodic relationship to Martin Heidegger during her student days in Weimar Germany is represented as cause and symbol of her infatuation with "Romanticism". How? Heidegger turned Nazi in 1933, Nazism derives from Romanticism, Arendt retained the existential mode of philosophy, thus Arendt is an adherent of Heideggerian Romanticism. Logical?

Hannah Arendt's study of a Jewish *sekouarde* of the early nineteenth century, written when she was twenty-seven years old, is addressed as an example of her enduring link to the German Romantic tradition. Has Gellner ever read her later works, including her study of totalitarianism? It may well be an unsuccessful study of this subject, as many historians (including one of the under-estimated) believe, but it hardly glorifies Romanticism. Nor do her other political tracts. Responsible reviewing?

Finally, Gellner's sneers suggest that your reviewer has sacrificed fairness and truth for the sake of a bon mot. It is possible that Arendt deserved some come-pance for her own bonmotism in the Eichmann trial; but to equate her with the SS (because the biographer refers to Arendt's "loyalty" in one of her chapter headings, and the SS believed in loyalty) certainly overshoots the mark. Arendt's ideas deserve a good deal of criticism on the part of historians and political philosophers

alike. Gellner's review is hardly a step in the right direction.

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'Edmund Ironside'

Sir, - No one knows who wrote *Edmund Ironside*. Eric Sams is persuaded that it is an early work of Shakespeare. I am not - yet. My previous letter (September 17), however, was not prompted by any wish to refute but by dissatisfaction with the case presented in his article.

I look forward to considering, when he publishes it, his evidence for regarding the manuscript as authorial and the hand as Shakespeare's. I confess to having misapprehended, and consequently confused, his point about the Archbishop of Canterbury, which indeed affords strong evidence against a date of composition in the months, or even perhaps years, immediately following November 1589.

Eric Sams (Letters, September 24) chooses to allude to the fact that I supervised the work of Eliot Slater for his excellent University of London thesis on the vocabulary of *The Reign of King Edward III*, 1596, often attributed to Shakespeare since Edward Capell first modestly offered the suggestion in 1760. I count it my privilege to have done so. But neither I, nor I believe Dr Slater, would claim that his thorough statistical analysis of *Edmund III* and of its relation to Shakespeare's vocabulary presents more than one side of the question. He has shown, in detail and much more clearly than earlier investigators, that the vocabulary of the whole of *Edmund III* stands in so close a relation to the plays within the Shakespeare canon as to be quite compatible with common authorship. He has not attempted the far larger task of demonstrating that the rarer vocabulary of *Edmund III* is incom-

patible with authorship by any other known dramatist of the period (except Marlowe, whose plays, having been adequately considered, were available for his investigation). Eliot Slater's method has real positive value as corroborative evidence for the attribution of *Edmund III* to Shakespeare, but it stops far short of conclusive demonstration, and must continue to do so until more systematic study of the vocabulary of the other playwrights has been completed. Nor do Slater's conclusions, however encouraging they may be to those of us who believe that common authorship affords the best explanation of the many and various links between *Edmund III* and Shakespeare's plays, remove all difficulties from the attribution, among them the decision of Homing and Condon to exclude it from the Folio of 1623.

RICHARD PROUDFOOT,
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Alexander Pasternak

Sir, - In the course of reviewing *The Correspondence of Boris Pasternak and Olga Freidenberg* (noticed in the TLS October 1) in *These Magazine* of August 9 this year, Patricia Blake asserted that "From Olga Freidenberg's diary, which Editor Mossman has used to illuminate the letters, we also learn that Pasternak's brother Alexander was a member of the Cheka, the first Soviet secret police, during the Great Purge." If this charge were substantiated, it would be extremely discreditable. If not, it is a monstrous allegation to have made. Alexander Pasternak, alas, is no longer alive to reply in person; he died in January 1982. It is therefore important to state very firmly that there is no evidence whatever to support the allegation and that Patricia Blake's interpretation of one paragraph in Olga Freidenberg's retrospective diary is a product of her own ignorance, grafted on to the defective editing and translation of Elliott Mossman.

The paragraph occurs on page 176 of the English-language edition of the book. It refers to 1936 or 1937, the period of the Great Purge.

Alexander came from Moscow with his wife, Irina, and Fedya, his son. Both Alexander and Irina were architects. Alexander was building the Moscow-Volga Canal at the time, so he was in

uniform and had the expectation of being decorated. He was afraid of the anticipated modal end of his Chekist uniform. Sasha wasted no time in asking him to slip Kalinin a petition to have Musya freed when he received the medal from Kalinin's hands. The idea was preposterous and utterly hopeless.

(Editor's note) Chekist: a member of the Choka (Extraordinary Commission), the first Soviet secret police.

Architects of the Moscow-Volga Canal were uniformed because they were on the payroll of the Interior Ministry (NKVD), all or many of whose employees were uniformed. That does not make architects into secret policemen - even though, as it happens, the same Ministry was from 1934 onwards in charge of the secret police and even though the uniforms of the two professions resembled one another.

It was this resemblance which, according to Freidenberg, made Alexander "afraid" of his uniform. Her opinion for the uniform itself is the compound *voyerno-chekistskaya* (literally, "military-Chekist"), a vague and all-embracing expression which describes the flavour of the garment and not the affiliation of its wearer. Mossman's translation and editorial note are therefore seriously misleading. For that matter, even "chekist" on its own is a casual conversational term, rather than a technical one; as Mossman ought to have pointed out (and as Patricia Blake ought to know), "Cheka" ceased to be the official title of the Soviet secret police in February 1922, some fifteen years before the Great Purge and some thirty years before Freidenberg compiled her retrospective diary.

As for the proposed petition to Kalinin (then titular head of the Soviet Government) to seek the release from detention of Freidenberg's sister-in-law Musya: if Alexander had been a secret policeman, we may be sure that his relatives would have expected him to undertake some thing to get Musya released that was a good deal less risky than slipping the head of state a petition in the middle of a presentation parade.

PETER M. OPPENHEIMER,
Christ Church, Oxford.

The Cambridge

Lawrence

Sir, - I have only just caught up with the article by Michael Holroyd and Sandra Jobson on the Lawrence

copyright (September 3), in which I am several times quoted. It states that I have "questioned the moral authority for adding, in the case of *Sons and Lovers* - a good deal of material that was edited out of the original manuscript by Edward Gollner". The first point is that no one has yet added anything to *Sons and Lovers*, since the Cambridge edition is not yet completed, let alone published. The last time I discussed the matter with its editor, Carl Benbow, he said that he had not yet decided whether to restore the passages cut by Gollner to the text, or to print them as an appendix. There is a strong argument for restoring them to the text; I happen to think that the argument against is stronger. Either way it is a matter of scholarly and critical judgment, not of "moral authority". Every Cambridge edition is striving to be true to Lawrence's final intention. Inevitably, some of their decisions will be questioned, but we can hardly question their motives, or their morality.

KEITH SAGAR,
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Editing

Frances Yates

Sir, - In his interesting review (August 27) of Volume 1 of the *Collected Essays of Frances Yates*, Robin Briggs criticizes the publisher of the book for not having found "an editor who could have coped with [the] obvious difficulties" in the early articles on Giordano Bruno reported in the volume. Any reproach for not having done this should perhaps rather be addressed to the undersigned as Dame Frances's literary executor. Perhaps they may also be absolved because the volume in question was handed to the publishers by its author well before her death. She had decided not to "update" the articles on Bruno. She knew, of course, how much her views on him had changed since they were written. Indeed she says so in the preface she added to the volume. She thought, however, that the articles contained material not to be found in her later book *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, material which was worth making more easily available.

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MARTIN CLARK's *Antonio Gramsci and the Revolution that Failed* was published in 1977.

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PAUL JOHNSON's books include *A Place in History, 1974*, and *A History of Christianity, 1976*.

BLAKE MORRISON is the author of *The Movement: English Poetry and Fiction of the 1950s, 1980*, and *Second Heaven, 1982*.

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EDWARD NORMAN's books include *Church and Society in England 1770-1970, 1976*.

TOM PAULIN's most recent collection of poems is *In the Strange Museum, 1980*.

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CINEMA

The highbrow's favourite lowbrow

Philip French

WILLIAM ROTHMAN
Hitchcock - The Murders Gaze
371pp. Harvard University Press.
£19.25.
0 674 40410 6

JEAN NARBONNE (Editor)
Alfred Hitchcock
Cahiers du Cinéma: Hors Série 8
106pp. Paris: L'Étoile. 60 fr.

There are certain things moviegoers would not know about Alfred Hitchcock. They've known them for over forty years and in consequence he is just about the only directorial personality in the history of cinema to have imposed himself upon popular audiences. He is pre-eminently "the master of suspense", a cherished sobriquet (possibly invented by his own press agents) that became more famous than George Robey's "Prime Minister of Mirth". Starting with his first fully achieved picture, *The Lodger*, he signed his works with brief personal appearances that became over the years increasingly comic, studied and emblematic. His real signature, however, was visual, "the Hitchcock Touch", which in the small gesture (a traitor's missing finger, a windmill's sails turning in the wrong direction, a still face in a shifting tennis crowd) or the big scene (a crop-dusting plane machine-gunning a New York advertising executive in a middle-western cornfield) provided us with unforgettable nightmare images of danger in broad daylight, of extraordinary things happening to ordinary people. He was also the friendly magician who first surprised us, then took us behind the scenes to show how the tricks were done, and talked about his simple philosophy. He wanted to disturb and to be loved, to frighten and entertain: and in the ambivalent genre he helped shape, the comedy-thriller, he achieved this. No other movie-maker - except at his zenith Hitchcock's fellow Londoner, the aloof Charlie Chaplin - ever excited so warmly personal a response.

William Rothman, in *Hitchcock: the Murders Gaze*, challenges this simple view of Hitchcock. For him "the knowing Hitchcock who emerges in this book is a strikingly different figure, from 'the Master of Suspense' celebrated at the American Film Institute's Life Achievement Award Dinner in 1979 and honoured in lengthy obituaries the following year. Indeed he goes so far as to regard his book as 'a life and death struggle' between himself and Hitchcock for the fellow's true identity. In a symbolic re-enactment of the final sequence of *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, he sees himself playing Hannay to Hitchcock's Mr. Memory and exposing the music hall entertainer as an agent of darkness.

Rothman escorts us almost shot by shot through five of the Master's black-and-white movies, beginning with *The Lodger*, where "at the outset of his career, he announced his central concerns and declared a position - at once a philosophical one on the conditions of human existence and a critical one on the powers and limitations of the medium and the art of film - to which he remained faithful for over fifty-five years". The others are two British films - *Murder (1930)*, the first thriller conceived in the sound era (Blackmail, his first talking picture, was a half-completed when sound came), and *The Thirty-Nine Steps (1935)*, the picture that established his international reputation - and two American films - *Shadow of a Doubt (1943)*, the film which invariably cited the personal film-invariably cited the Hollywood pictures - and *Psycho (1960)*, his last monochrome film and the most profitable he ever made (it was also among the cheapest, being produced under TV conditions, and the only one for which he put up most of the budget himself). Rothman's text is accompanied by over 600 smallish frame enlargements - the most extensive and unattractive way of illustrating a book. But these blow-ups are essential to Rothman's purpose because the cardinal element of his argument is that the precise positioning

of the camera (and our consciousness of this) is central to an understanding of Hitchcock.

a measure and expression of the modernity of the Hitchcock film is its call upon us to acknowledge at every moment, not only what is on view within the frame but the camera as well. One of his deepest insights is that no comment can be fully comprehended without accounting for the camera. Another is that, in the camera's tense and shifting relationships with its human subjects, the author's and viewer's roles are intimately revealed. Yet another is that the camera's presence is fundamentally ambiguous. It frames our views: the instrument of

crucial by Eric Rohmer and Claude Chabrol, who in their seminal book of 1957 treated Hitchcock as "a Catholic auteur" but one "who refuses to sermonize, to proselytize".

These claims for Hitchcock and his Hawks were subjected to a great deal of ridicule at the time, and it is important to note the climate in which they appeared. In 1954 *Sight and Sound*, then as now the voice of the Establishment in British film criticism, had assigned an inexperienced young critic (later to be an assistant editor on the TLS and literary editor of *The Listener*) to review both *Dial M for Murder* and *Rear Window* in half a page. "Graciously" is the word one wants to describe the overall quality of



"Just another manly story wrapped up in a pseudo-psychological analysis" is how Hitchcock described his film *Spellbound (1945)* in which a psychiatrist (Ingrid Bergman) falls in love with her new boss (Gregory Peck) before discovering that he is an amnesiac who has assumed the identity of a murdered doctor. The master of suspense, however, was far from unconcerned with the representation of the unconscious in the film and he asked Salvador Dalí, whom he admired for the literal precision with which he depicted the oniric world, to provide surrealistic designs for his startling dream sequences. (The above example of Dalí's work for *Spellbound* is taken from *Movies of the Forties*, edited by Ann Lloyd: 21pp. Orbis. £7.95. 0 85613 454 6).

our gaze. It shares our passivity. But it also represents the author: it is the instrument of his presentation to us, his "narration", and manifests to us his godlike power over the world of the film, a world over which he presides.

Had Rothman published his book twenty years ago, it would have been not only the eloquent, intelligent work that it is clearly is, but also the wholly original one he misleadingly claims to be. Following the radical re-appraisal of Hitchcock in France, there began in 1962 a transformation of Hitchcock's status in the English-speaking world. That has produced a sizeable body of writing that Rothman is clearly acquainted with but only occasionally, and with the greatest reluctance, acknowledges.

In 1962 Peter Bogdanovich organized a Hitchcock retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, publishing a pioneering monograph to accompany it. The same year in London a group of young critics launched the magazine *Movie* to challenge the prevailing orthodoxies and snobberies that patronized Hollywood, preached "commitment", and elevated Continental and Eastern European cinema for its superior moral seriousness. The first issue of *Movie* contained a list of directors then working in the English-speaking cinema into six categories: "Great", "Brilliant", "Very Talented", "Talented", "Competent or Ambitious", and "The Rest". Hitchcock and Howard Hawks during the following year *Movie* contained several articles on Hitchcock, most of which were concerned with his mastery of the medium, and not at all with the theological matters that were thought

Hitchcock's latest film *Rear Window* ... the unpredictable twist of the plot that one is expecting never comes". He wrote. On the other hand, "Dial M for Murder" is excellent, but it remains predominantly a success for the playwright Frederick Knott and the following issue of *Sight and Sound*, Lindsay Anderson savaged the special October 1954 number of *Cahiers du Cinéma* (reprinted this year in facsimile as the second half of the eighth *Hors Série* edition of *Cahiers*) containing articles by Chabrol, Truffaut, Bazin and others:

This magazine seems now to have been almost completely taken over by the covery of bright young things whose eccentric, enthusiastic, paraded, so generously in recent issues, have already sadly impaired its reputation. Here they are more vociferous and preposterous than ever. To the accompaniment of a ceremonial tattoo of mutual back-slaping, Hitchcock is hoisted into the pantheon - up there with Murnau, Renoir and Howard Hawks.

No major review was accorded to any subsequent picture, and when *Psycho* appeared in 1960, it was reviewed together with Billy Wilder's *The Apartment* by Peter John Dyer, who thought both Hitchcock and Wilder "astorously and exuberantly vulgar". He was not alone in doing so, though. In *Psycho*, at all he was in a minority. The film received a generally bad press, a civilized revulsion from its apparently heartless violence being widely expressed. An old friend of Hitchcock's, C.A. Lejeune, disliked the movie so much that its popularity was a success - and its indication of the direction the cinema was taking, figured in her decision to retire after

nearly thirty years as *The Observer's* film critic and hand her mantle to Penelope Gilliat.

But *Movie's* critical views came to be widely accepted, and what perhaps clinched the argument so far as Hitchcock is concerned was the appearance in 1965 of a book (the first about his work in English) by one of its regular contributors, Robin Wood, at the time a grammar-school English teacher in the Home Counties. His scrupulously argued account of Hitchcock as a major moralist was concerned largely with the American films from *Strangers on a Train* to *Marnie*. The looming influence here was less *Cahiers du Cinéma* and their *politique des auteurs*, than *Scenarist*, the Great Tradition and F. R. Leavis, under whom Wood had studied at Cambridge. Wood was very aware of, and slightly embarrassed by, Hitchcock the showman, and his chapter on *Psycho* (compared favourably with *Macbeth* and *Heart of Darkness*) and considered "one of the key works of our age" concluded with the observation that "Hitchcock (again, if his interviews are to be trusted) is a much greater artist than he knows". Another, less frequent contributor to *Movie*, though equally anti-establishment in his attitude, Raymond Dargatzis, began a series of *Films and Filming* during the late 1960s, which became *The Strange Case of Alfred Hitchcock*, the first book to give equal weight to the English and American films, and still the most complex reading of his career.

A few months before the appearance of Robin Wood's study, John Russell Taylor brought out a book on the key directors of the time, *Cinema Eye*, *Cinema Eye*, which was a strong indication of the critical tide. Taylor was film critic of *The Times* and a *Sight and Sound* stalwart; a decade later he was to be invited to be Hitchcock's authorized biographer. He had absorbed the lessons of *Movie* and *Cahiers*, and in *Cinema Eye*, *Cinema Eye*, for the first time, he gave the critics, *Rear Window* and *Vertigo* were given their due and Hitchcock accorded equal status with Bergman, Antonioni, Fellini and other international art-house luminaries. Nevertheless it was some time before this idea became generally accepted. I recall in the autumn of 1965 suggesting to a senior editor of *Time* that the appearance of Hitchcock's fiftieth film, *Torn Curtain* (then in production), might be a suitable occasion to make him the subject of a cover story. The magazine, for the first time, had recently bestowed this accolade on both Bergman and the so-called British New Wave directors. He respectfully noted the suggestion, but nothing came of it, and Hitchcock was not to be taken seriously by *Time* until they published an effusive double-page obituary in 1980.

Shortly thereafter François Truffaut's book-length interview *Le Cinéma selon Hitchcock* made its long-awaited appearance, but it was the eminence of the interviewer that led to an English version two years later, for at the time Truffaut's reputation - among the book-buying intelligentsia at least - stood far higher than Hitchcock's. It was, in this shallow, evasive, immensely entertaining book that Hitchcock so masterfully brought together the burgeoning critical esteem with the public persona forged by his own publicity machine.

That Hitchcock's critical reputation came first to equal Truffaut's, then to exceed it, is partly due to the rapid growth of film studies in the United States from the late 1960s onwards, and it is no coincidence that both Robin Wood and Raymond Dargatzis crossed the Atlantic to take up teaching appointments at North American universities. In order to expand the curriculum (and accommodate students unwilling to master foreign languages and cultures) the new film schools had to lay claim to the native film industry, and there ready-made was an academically respectable European and American hierarchy of Hollywood auteurs and *auteur-chic* scenes with Hitchcock at its apex, willing to be adapted for local use. (There was even for a short while a *Cahiers du Cinéma* in English, edited in New York

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à la carte du FRANCFORT

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The stage-struck novelist

F. W. J. Hemmings

ÉMILE ZOLA

Correspondence
Tome III, Juin 1877 - Mai 1880
Edited by B. H. Bakker and others
543pp. Montreal: Les Presses de
l'Université de Montréal. \$45.
2 7606 0547 7

The first two volumes of Zola's collected letters reviewed here on October 3, 1980) covered the first thirty-seven years of the writer's life. The third covers the next three years, and succeeding volumes are likely to have a similar time-span. After a disconcerting period of critical neglect, the sudden notoriety Zola acquired with the publication of *L'Assommoir* early in 1877 widened his circle of correspondents, who also tended more often than in the past to preserve his letters, if only for the sake of the signature.

Beyond this, the increased flow of letters can be seen as an incidental consequence of his increased income, which allowed him to indulge in a six-month holiday away from Paris from May to November 1877. The following summer he escaped once more, this time to the little hamlet of Médan, near where the river Oise flows into the Seine, "un trou où je passe l'été, loin de toute station", as he described it to the director of the Odéon Theatre. Here he bought a cottage with plenty of ground, built on to it, and used it as his principal residence for the rest of his life, returning to town only for the winter season.

The move from Paris obliged him to rely much more heavily on letter-writing as a means of keeping in touch with his friends and professional contacts in the capital, who could seldom be persuaded to make the tiresome train journey to Trier, followed by a half-hour's walk back beside the tracks to reach Médan. The previous summer, at L'Estaque, than a very countryfied village on the outskirts of Paris, he had been even more "in the attack". He appreciated the peace and quiet, which was what he had come for, the proximity of the sea and the splendour of the sunsets - not to mention "les bouillottes-bouillottes, la cuisine au plume, les coquillages et les sautelets aquatiques dont je mange sans mesure". But the isolation was a little too complete; he found himself sadly missing "tous les carcans dont nous vivons à Paris". So the letters over this period - to his younger disciples Alexis, Céard, and Hennique, and to more elderly friends like Turgenev and Edmond de Goncourt - are clamorous for "news" of the kind the newspapers cannot give him: "les journaux m'ont rien dit, que ça va mal, ne me renseignent." They gave far too much space to political comment and far too little to the literary scene.

For a writer who professed so exclusive an interest in his own times, Zola appeared to have been extraordinarily indifferent to the crisis the country was going through in 1877: a crisis precipitated by the decision of Marshal MacMahon, President of the Republic, to dismiss his prime minister on May 16, in spite of the fact that no other parliamentary leader could command a majority. Eventually he had to dissolve the Chamber and risk the results of fresh elections. Gambetta made his famous remark that, once the country had spoken through the ballot-box, MacMahon would have only two choices: "se démettre" or "se démettre". The elections took place on October 14 and in spite of a desperate campaign by the royalists, the republicans were returned with a working majority, and MacMahon had to "submit". The long-term implications were profound: for the next sixty years, France was to remain a parliamentary, not a presidential democracy. But Zola, who one must not forget had proved himself a brilliant parliamentary correspondent at Bordeaux and Versailles during and immediately after the 1870 war, shut his ears and eyes to all this. It is questionable whether he even troubled to read the papers.

What he evidently found far more exciting than this thirteenth-century political was a private dream which

about this time he fancied was nearing realization - the dream of becoming the first truly modern dramatist of his age (Zola had not heard of Ibsen at this date). Even the total failure of his farce *Le Boubon de rose* in May 1878 could not discourage him. He confided to Flaubert on November 30 that he remained "toujours très tourmenté par l'idée de faire du théâtre", adding that he had been reading Augier, Dumas fils and Labiche to see if he could not match or even surpass them. He indulged this fantasy secretly, as though it were something he was a little ashamed of. He had agreed to let a professional playwright, William Busnach, adapt his novel *L'Assommoir* for the stage, but he insisted on a covert collaboration and wrote him long letters from L'Estaque criticizing the scenario Busnach had submitted and suggesting various ways of improving it. Back in Paris, he took a close interest in the casting, attended all the rehearsals, and even though he steadfastly refused to allow his name to appear as co-author, the melodrama, which in fact proved a great popular success, must have owed much to the work he put into it. Emboldened by this experience, he enlisted the help of his younger friends Céard and Hennique to prepare a dramatization of an earlier novel, *La Conquête de Plassans*. There are several references to this project in letters written in the autumn of 1879, but in the end nothing came of it.

One result of this *hantise du théâtre* was that Zola, for perhaps the first time in his life, found himself having close dealings with actors, actresses, and theatre directors, and this may well have helped determine the direction taken by *Nana*, which was his next masterpiece after *L'Assommoir*. For *Nana* is very much a novel of the

theatre, though it was not originally conceived as such, but rather as a novel about prostitution; yet there was no obvious connection between these two themes. Even though, judged by the strict standards of the time, actresses in the nineteenth century often led irregular, not to say rakish lives, the demarcation line between the theatrical world and the *demi-monde* was quite firmly drawn. In the *Grand Seize*, the private room in the Café Anglais where men of fashion played baccarat till the sun came up, they would sometimes invite actresses to supper, and sometimes Indies exclaiming a much older profession, but they never mixed the categories, and if a woman of the town tried to gatecrash she was politely but firmly told to come back the following evening.

Zola's *fièvre théâtrale*, as he called it in a letter to Hennique, was further heightened when in August 1879 he heard from the Italian actress Giacinta Pezzana that, having read the text of the dramatized version of *Thérèse Raquin*, she had decided to stage the play in Naples with Eleonora Duse in the title-part. It had been a wild success, as she reported, the curtain having been raised seven times at the end of the third act. This was only one of the numerous letters from Italy Zola was receiving at this time, all showing that it was in this country - appropriately enough, since he had the greatest following outside France. He had been in touch with the dramatist Alessandro Parodi since 1876. Parodi had brought the visiting journalist Edmondo De Amicis to see him in July 1878, and De Amicis published a detailed account of the interview on his return to Milan. He had a daughter, a champion in Felice Camerini, no fewer than sixty-four letters to Zola.

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Wholly apologetic

David Coward

NED RIVAL

Les Amours pervers: Une biographie de Nicolas-Edme Rétil de la Bretonne
351pp. Paris: Perrin. 78fr.

Stendhal detected a whiff of the real eighteenth century in him. Henri Murger read him in hospital. Baudelaire told his publisher of a volume of "ravisants extraits" to be taken from the comping. His name was hurtled as an insult at Zola and biographers of the specialized sort rushed out to acquire first editions. His "frank" books were reprinted and his reputation as a downmarket Sade was confirmed. Yet Valéry set him above Rousseau and Simone de Beauvoir once claimed to have read all of him in the autumn of 1930.

This is something which has been done by very few people and Rétil's latest biography is not of their number. Of course one sympathizes. Rétil left a mountain of books: 60,000 pages of novels, stories, plays, reforming tracts and philosophical disquisitions, some unobtainable now, others still unreadable - there are forty-two volumes of *Les Contemporains*, for example - and all autobiographical to some degree.

His writings are more than confessional: they are distinctly

apologetic, the occupational therapy of an unquiet man. His entire output is an extension of his personality, which occupied the forefront and pervades the background. Prickly and unclutterable, he was also incurably shy and he confided bold but embellished truths to his anonymous reader in the public intimacy of the printed page. The whole of his work is more than the sum of his many parts, however. For while some of the parts are exceedingly dull, they do add up to a fascinating portrait of a man at war with himself.

Born into a family of Burgundian cultivators, Rétil was apprenticed to a printer at Auxerre and worked as a typesetter in Paris for a dozen years before publishing his first novel in 1767 at the age of thirty-three. He made his name with *Le Pigeon parvenu* (1775) which also marked the first appearance of Gaudet d'Armes, a powerful and disturbing philosophical temper who urged that the path to freedom for "superior" beings lay in the rejection of conventional moral values. Rétil himself could never act on this advice and remained bound by a rigidly Jansenist sense of sin. He tried to deal with his insistent sexuality by reforming society to accommodate it. But by the 1780s, seeing his schemes come to nothing, he had begun devising fantastic, compensatory worlds in which he was admired, respected and triumphant. He gave his utopias a scientific basis by adopting a proto-Darwinian view of nature and by fitting them into a self-renewing God.

At The Gallery

(for Arthur Sale)

Another landscape, then - the chestnut stallion
Demurely waiting for his sugar-lump.
A meadow tied with streams of thins.
Gift of green for ever grazing on.
The house, the park, the slims in a burnished clump
Unfaded, onfall - what does it offer? Well

Too much, too much of joy and comfort
In its sweet particulars, with each acquaintance
Always found there at the same acquaintance
Untroubled by departure or a thought
Of more than slight disruption, mere mischance
And the light's insatiable moodiness.

John Mole

from the Italian critic, unfortunately only four of the rest having been, it is destroyed in the fighting during the Second World War. But the fact that De Sanctis made of it, which, in spite of the controversy, Zola recognized as the most exhaustive and penetrating analysis of his aims and intentions that had so far appeared in the country.

By 1880 Zola was rapidly becoming a figure of European stature: correspondents not just in Holland, Germany, and Austria, but also in the United States, were eagerly propagating the word of his acknowledged master, the novelist. This fact largely explains the original letters come to light today. To bring to light, the team of researchers headed by Bard Bakker in Paris and Colette Becker in Paris have combed collections as far apart as the Lenin Library in Moscow and the Library of Congress in Washington. The fruits of their efforts are becoming fully apparent. Among some rough calculations I have made, the proportion of "new" letters published to the others was of the order of 20 per cent in the first year, 35 per cent in the second, and 55 per cent in the third. It is not clear that the *Correspondance* is just an exhaustively annotated edition; it is now clear that it is a collection of documents, *inédits* which, completed will ensure that a portrait of the novelist can be drawn with a great deal more fine accuracy of focus than anyone could have dreamed possible a few years

POLITICS

Death of a conservative

Herbert Southworth

IAN GIBSON

La noche en que mataron a Calvo Sotelo
195pp. Barcelona: Vergara.
4 7178 370 3

LUIS ROMERO

Por qué y cómo mataron a Calvo Sotelo
117pp. Barcelona: Planeta.
4 320 5678 2

These two books, each concerning the murder of the Spanish monarchist leader José Calvo Sotelo early on the morning of July 13, 1936, appeared in this spring within a few weeks of each other. The story of the competition between them began a year or more ago, when Ian Gibson, an Anglo-Irishman with an international reputation based on his authoritative analysis of the murder of Garibaldi, wrote a book on the assassination of Calvo Sotelo. Author and publisher could not agree on the conditions of the contract and José Manuel Lara, head of Planeta, sought another writer to carry out the idea, finally settling on the well-known novelist and historian Luis Romero; Gibson brought his manuscript to another Barcelona publisher. The race was on to see who would hit the bookshelves first. Gibson won by a few (profitable) weeks. According to a Madrid daily of May 7, 1936, his book was then in its fifth edition, making a total of 36,000 copies printed.)

If the reader relies on the titles, the two books seem to deal with the same subject, but there is a significant difference between them. Gibson confines himself very much within the same narrative of the murder of José Calvo Sotelo, an Assault Guards lieutenant and militant socialist, which took place late in the evening of July 13, 1936, and the revenge killing of Calvo Sotelo which occurred a few hours later, early on the following morning.

Romero's book suffers, as have his other works of history, from his

careless inability to refuse the temptation to embroider on historical facts. This method is frustrating for students of the Spanish Civil War. He even tells us what Calvo Sotelo was thinking a few minutes before his death. Gibson has done far more leg work than has Romero, and he has found living three of the men who were in the personnel-carrier in which Calvo Sotelo was kidnapped and killed; Romero has talked with only one of these men. Gibson has interviewed at least two persons who throw a new light on the murder of Castillo, whereas Romero offers no new information at all on the subject.

To illustrate Romero's methodology, I refer readers to pages 47-50 of his book, where he discusses the sessions of the Comisión de Actas held from March 17 to April 2. This commission, presided over by the moderate Socialist Indalecio Prieto, was empowered to deal with the Cortes seats whose legality was being challenged. Above all else, these sessions disclosed the extent to which Spanish elections were falsified by the government in power and its allies in the oligarchy. Just before the Commission was to decide on the contested seats of the Catholic leader Gil Robles and of Calvo Sotelo, Prieto resigned. Romero, in an ambiguous and rambling account, tells his readers that Prieto resigned rather than assume the responsibility of depriving the two Rightists of their seats. He gives no rigorous references for this judgment. There are no supporting footnotes. I see nothing in his inadequate bibliography to sustain his affirmation. For example, the pertinent comments of Paul Preston in *The Coming of the Spanish Civil War* on this matter are not mentioned either in the text, the footnotes or the bibliography.

Romero's method demands the reader's unlimited confidence in the author. It makes, perhaps, for easier reading but it also undoubtedly weakens the constraints for historical accuracy. I labour this point because I believe the debate during the sessions of the Comisión de Actas to have been one of the decisive moments in the decision of the Spanish Right to attempt to overthrow the Popular

Front. In a country with a half-starved peasantry, suddenly aware of its rights and power, with the Left in control of the government and proving in the Comisión de Actas that the century-old tradition of wholesale cheating at the polls (*caciquismo*) would not be tolerated in the future, what hope of salvation remained for the Spanish Right except a military revolt? Romero's book on the whole tries to justify the military uprising as inevitable in view of the prevalent disorders, which Calvo Sotelo and Gil Robles, from their seats in the Cortes, were during all this period constantly exaggerating, playing on public opinion to prepare the country for the coming rebellion, of which both were eager collaborators.

The little attention that Romero has paid to the details of the two murders can probably be explained by the limited time he was given to finish his book, and the exigencies of the fixed dates for literary prizes. (It won this year's Premio Espejo de España - value around £15,000 - an award that Gibson won two years ago. It is also a close runner-up for another prize: the most poorly proof-read book of the year.) Haste does make waste. Perhaps some day Romero will publish a book dedicated exclusively to the footnotes lacking in his historical works. It would be a service to his readers and perhaps not so much of a disservice to himself as his publishers seem to think.

The lack of proof-reading is not the only sign of pressure on Romero; his book could have been vastly improved by being rewritten and if the author had decided to define his own political position. But confused though it frequently is, Romero's book is loaded beyond any doubt toward a Rightist interpretation concerning the responsibilities for the situation that brought about the Spanish Civil War. (Was it written with an eye on present-day Spanish politics?) Gibson's sympathies with the Spanish Socialist Party are well known and are equally evident in his book. But Gibson, aside from giving more information about the two political murders, is also far more secretive about his sources, and these two factors make his by far the more valuable book for the historian.

Denunciations of a radical

Martin Clark

ANTONIO GRAMSCI

Gramsci Torinese 1913-1917
195pp. L25,000.

Città Futura 1917-1918
192pp. L35,000.

Edited by Sergio Caprioglio
Trans. Einaudi.

Five years ago the Turin publishing house of Einaudi issued an excellent new edition of Gramsci's *Primo libro* (reviewed in the TLS on October 31, 1975); it has now produced the first two volumes of a new and much more complete edition of Gramsci's pre-prison writings. The first, in eight volumes, will eventually cover the whole period from Gramsci's steps in student journalism in 1913 to his arrest in 1926. One can only hope that the later volumes reach the same standards of scholarship as the first. By Sergio Caprioglio in the first volume, we shall have for the first time a reliable corpus of Gramsci's work.

Caprioglio had some formidable obstacles to overcome. Virtually all of Gramsci's writings at this time were anonymous pieces in socialist journals; all but a curiosity. He does not allow a selection to be published. Personally, I think he was wrong. His writings may have been ephemeral, but they were not trivial. They were an opus, in which a highly intelligent man reflected on day-to-day events. As in most diaries, the interest lies not in the facts discussed, but in the atmosphere conveyed, and in the personality revealed.

These writings, indeed, show us the real Gramsci of history, perhaps unfamiliar to those who know only the Prison Notebooks. He was not a Marxist philosopher, despite his

carefully through the files of the *Grido del Popolo*, and of the Turin paper *Avanti!*. The attributions have must always be somewhat doubtful, but I found few to dispute: Caprioglio uses style, content and survivors as his touchstones, and he uses them wisely. Finally, he is able to exclude a number of spurious works already published in previous editions of Gramsci, from the canon. The most significant of these are thirty-eight articles from early 1916, Gramsci's first period as a full-time journalist. Altogether, this is a splendid edition, replete with informative notes, bibliographies and all the useful apparatus of scholarship. Caprioglio prints the spurious apocrypha as appendices to each volume, and even puts lines in the margin to denote censored passages. The whole series will obviously be an essential basis for future Gramscian exegesis.

But the question always arises with such monumental works: is it worth it? This question is particularly acute for the canonical works of Socialism, because the feebleness of much Marxist political thinking is at least partly due to excessive reverence for the sacred texts and the founding fathers. Gramsci himself thought in this way, and he refused to allow a selection to be published. Personally, I think he was wrong. His writings may have been ephemeral, but they were not trivial. They were an opus, in which a highly intelligent man reflected on day-to-day events. As in most diaries, the interest lies not in the facts discussed, but in the atmosphere conveyed, and in the personality revealed.

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interest in both Marxism and philosophy; nor was he a detached intellectual, musing on historical or cultural themes, despite his wide reading and intellectual curiosity. He was an intrinsic moralist, with a nonconformist conscience. He disliked drink, gambling, and the bourgeoisie; the last because it was parasitic. He approved of hard work and free trade. Above all, he was a great radical journalist: clear-headed, unsentimental and persuasive. He wrote beautifully, often with a biting sarcasm, wit, and he had the essential gift of the public prosecutor, the ability to denounce effectively. Here, for example, is a passing comment on the hapless Gino Olivetti, a former free-trader turned protectionist: "Renegades are all the same, whatever party or idea they have abandoned. They are all contemptible, because you never know whether they were more sincere yesterday or whether they are more sincere today."

There was, of course, plenty to denounce in wartime Turin. These volumes reflect the various scandals, the profiteering, the artificial bread shortages and the long hours of work in the munitions factories. Gramsci about how politics worked, and he did not like what he found. So he attacked the unworthy. In the process he became fairly unpopular with his fellow Socialists who were, in many cases, "collaborating" with the authorities. But he also gained vital self-confidence and knowledge. In short, the roots of his later career are here revealed. Without his wartime journalism, Gramsci could never have led the Factory Council movement in Turin after the war, let alone become leader of the Italian Communist Party.

Finally, these books reveal the extraordinary range of Gramsci's interests. His theatre criticisms alone

fill over a hundred pages in each volume; and the rest - editorials, notes, reviews, reports - vary from parochial polemic to the international strategic balance, from Rudyard Kipling to Esperanto. He nearly always had something interesting or amusing to say. Moreover, in August 1917 he was made editor of the *Grido del Popolo*. His work as editor is not, of course, documented here, but it provided a marvellous opportunity for Gramsci's journalistic skills, and under him the journal was transformed politically and culturally. Gramsci always considered this educational work as vital, and in later years it was very much the distinguishing feature both of the *Ordine Nuovo* and of *L'Unità*. If the Italian Communist Party today is more open-minded and generally "better" educated than communist parties elsewhere, then it owes it to a tradition of debate founded in wartime Turin, and greatly illuminated by this edition.

Spain 1808 - 1975 by Raymond Carr, which first appeared in 1966, has recently been republished by Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press (55pp. £19.50, paper back £9.95, 0 19 22127 4). Long considered to be a standard work on the economic, social and political origins of modern Spain up until General Franco's victory in the Civil War, five chapters have now been added in order to cover the years up to the death of Franco. The additional chapters are "Franco and Fascism", "The World War and Its Aftermath", "1939 - 57", "From Conformism to Conflict, 1957 - 75", "Francoism: from Autarky to the Consumer Society, 1959 - 75" and "Society, 1959 - 75". There is an additional extensive bibliographical essay in which recent contributions of Spanish scholars to the period 1808 to 1939 are considered.

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Purposefully unreal

T. J. Reed

MICHAEL BEDDOW

The Field of Humanity: Studies in the Bildungsroman from Wieland to Thomas Mann
325pp. Cambridge University Press.
£25.
0 521 24533 8

Not everyone's heart leaps up when he beholds the *Bildungsroman*, with its massive bulk and its narrow focus on the education of a single human being. The critic who writes about it may be correspondingly not very welcome. He risks being a heavy re-narrator of unexciting-to-nonexistent plots, a dutiful expounder of already explicit messages, or an apologist for the well-known German earnestness. He has above all to meet the objection that springs naturally from comparisons with the mainstream European novel: that the works of the *Bildungsroman* tradition achieve their results in a world not quite real and therefore not sufficiently resistant to foregone didactic conclusions. This state of affairs is normally and plausibly put down to the German lack of a complex social reality which might have provoked the more normal European type of novel. German literature and German society together are seen as trailing behind, belated and of the second order.

Dr Beddow's ambitious study — he takes on Wieland, Goethe, Stifter, Keller and Thomas Mann — meets the problem head-on by denying the common opinion. Not only does he say it would be "a mistake" to explain fictional unrealities by reference to historical circumstances in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Germany, which merely left the writer "free" to engage in pure fictions, he goes further and claims that the evident unrealities, pervasive in some specimens of the genre and patchy in others, were meant deliberately to signal the fictive status of the work, which then allowed author and reader a consciously abstract reflection on human nature. This was not however the abstraction of science or philosophy, against whose pressure in the background the *Bildungsroman* was a reaction. In its more informal way, exploring and questioning rather than seeking to sustain a doctrinal position, it conducted its search for an "authentic humanity".

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The argument is an odd compound of old-fashioned humanist concern, and of a modern hyperconsciousness of "fictionality". The first was certainly part of those "expectations within which the works were conceived" and which (we are reminded) the reader from another time and culture must try to enter into; the second, for all the eighteenth century's theories of aesthetic semblance, was not. The subtler intentions and fiction-consciousness imputed to the five novelists are not the historical fact sometimes here alleged; at most they can be inferred from reading the novels, and their authors' statements about them, in a particular way. It is not even easy to see a uniform mode or level of reflective awareness which they share as successive stages of an otherwise very tradition-bound genre: no single common way emerges in which "fictionality" is established or explicated. There may be a departure of narrative from empirical reality (what critics operating on the mimetic level would call a failure); or an ironic mixture of real and unreal; or the creation of a fiction by a character (as in Hans Castorp's dream in *The Magic Mountain*); or a fiction by which people live (as the ideal Mediterranean

race within that dream is said to do).

In every case something different, standing in a different relation to the author's project and the reader's comprehension — as so much an objective link between these works as a slender thread of analytical interest that catches them together by different corners, in every case at some distance from the centre.

Nevertheless, the interest within each chapter is not peripheral. Dr Beddow's analyses are all very much to the point, the substantive point of "the good life" and "the right balance" which it is impossible to refine out of this of all genres. His eye may have been caught by the austere charms of modern narratology, but he has not pursued her very far. At most (and this is beneficial) he has been led to conduct a more rigorously formulated argument than the genre has usually received, and the consequence is a good crop of not merely piecemeal insights, especially where he deals with the intellectually tougher, more complex structures.

His earnest discourse is a bit much for the gauzy webs of Wieland, whose intentions can only with large charity be claimed as "deep" (a passing remark

rightly places Wieland "closer to the fuzzy edges than to the centres of original thought"); it takes too subtle a twist in order to rescue Stifter's Utopian still-life; and it is rather hard, conversely, on Keller — perhaps because his down-to-earth Swiss virtues on the "brink of philistinism" do not allow much fictive levitation. But with Goethe and Thomas Mann the critical rigour is matched by the density of literary substance. At least with these two writers, no amount of critical reflection can exceed the scope of their own, and speculation about intentions and effects need not be kept within narrow bounds. These chapters contain impressive interpretations of *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* and *The Magic Mountain*. And beyond that Dr Beddow formulates problems and describes responses which are central to the writer's work and thought as a whole. His account of the "harshness" of Goethe's vision challenges common assumptions, but the view is intelligently sustained by drawing the novel and Goethe's aesthetic thought together; while the reading of Mann's text as an exercise in "Reconstruction" is increasingly plausible the broader the context in which it is placed. In particular, it is a triumph of good sense

to say, in the teeth of a critical tradition which has always confused a lack of resolution, that *The Magic Mountain* offered Germans in the 1920s the most unequivocal guidance. His task the form had ever had to take. It is scarcely a virtue form now, but that — given its inherent limitations — need not be lamented. What would be the literary quality of the text — its capacity to create a fiction that can also be a way of life — rooted in the new narratology that it undoes the connections between writing and (to use a vulgar word) reality, decreasing circles of solipsism that they vanish inside their own assumptions. But need we be a pessimist? There are writers left who believe it is possible and legitimate to read narrative not just to see how it is put together, but to see how it is put together. Better than that, Beddow tries unsuccessfully to figure his sense of doom: "The Old Minerva, over-eager to take to her too often ends up flapping about a broad daylight".

silent. Rilke's feeling of loneliness towards Anita was addressed to the young woman he met then to a potential he sensed in her when he dedicated to her his *Baudelaire* poem. He wrote that she might only ever understand *Les Fleurs du Mal* much later in her life, but that Baudelaire's poetry might help her to extend the scope of understanding. This is not the voice of a "teacher without a message" as Rilke had described himself, but rather the message of poetic teaching.

Our pleasure in reading the correspondence is enhanced by Magda Kerényi's editing. Her scholarly introduction and her thoughtful commentary make most informative and helpful reading.

The poet as teacher

Irina Frowen

MAGDA KERÉNYI (Editor)

Rainer Maria Rilke / Anita Farrow
Briefwechsel
198pp. Frankfurt: Insel.
3 458 04888 X

Rilke's sensitive understanding of women has led malevolent interpreters to speak of the "harem" he created through the medium of letter-writing. The correspondence between the forty-five-year-old poet and a young Swiss girl of nineteen, Anita Farrow, dispels any apprehensions of *détournement*. Rilke is seen here in the role of a teacher introducing a notion of *l'ordre du cœur* into the intellectual and emotional turmoil of Anita's questions.

Deeply impressed by Rilke's reading from his works in St Gallen on November 7, 1919, Anita Farrow first wrote to him in January 1920. The correspondence lasted for six years. Anita, daughter of a well-known Swiss lawyer and politician, felt suffocated by the expectations and pressures imposed upon her by her family. She turned to Rilke for understanding and guidance. Rilke describes himself as a teacher without a subject, who could only be considered in distant point of orientation in the geometry of the heart, helping to determine a position and to fix an emotional relationship between the inner space and the objective reality.

When, for instance, deeply disturbed after a visit to a psychiatrist, Anita wrote to Rilke he provided that point of reorientation by communicating to her a different understanding of love. The psychiatrist had "enlightened" Anita about the erotic nature of her involvement with an older girl friend. Rilke convinced Anita that there could be no sense of guilt "as soul is body and body is soul" in a relationship that involves the whole person. He quotes Sappho as a model of the great love who revealed in her poetry the totality of love. Rilke considered the psychiatrist's approach could paralyse both emotional and artistic creativity. This advice reflects his own rejection of psychoanalysis; he had refused to commit Freud at the beginning of the First World War as he felt "that analysis could 'expel' the angels together with the devils".

The naive spontaneity of Anita's questions ("Do you believe in God, Rainer?") "Have you ever met a woman who understood you completely?" encourages Rilke to answer with greater simplicity than he finds in most of his other letters. As we are still waiting for the publication of Rilke's letters to his mother and his daughter, we may be grateful for

Anita's constant urging that Rilke should tell her more about his everyday life. The warmth of tone in Rilke's letters suggests that in this correspondence he chose to play the rôle he could never forgive Goethe for not having played in his correspondence with Bettina von Arnim. The great poet, Rilke felt, failed in his "correspondence with a child" to understand a *grosse Licheide* who turned to him for response. Rilke indeed draws Anita's attention to this correspondence, pointing to Bettina as a model of a loving woman whose feeling could transcend the object of her love.

Rilke's own model was not Goethe, but Baudelaire. Baudelaire was for him the poet *par excellence* who could transfigure oil life into art. Rilke sent

Anita *Les Fleurs du Mal* as a gift for her twentieth birthday with a dedication: a poem addressed to Baudelaire. Rilke praises Baudelaire as the true poet who could accept and redeem ugliness and pain. He commends Baudelaire's poetry to Anita as "a book for life", "a book for all lives". Yet, the fact that a later meeting in the house of Nanny Wunderlich-Volkart proved disappointing does not surprise. Anita worshipped in Rilke the poet and teacher, but could not cope with his physical presence. It paralysed her and, as she told the editor of this volume of a later date, while liking Rilke's forehead and eyes, she felt repelled by his mouth and chin.

After this encounter, in spite of repeated attempts of Anita's to resume the correspondence, Rilke remained

The stuff of legends

Helen Watanabe O'Kelly

LESLEY SHARPE

Schiller and the Historical Character: Presentation and Interpretation in the Historical Dramas
211pp. Oxford University Press.
£12.50.
0 19 815537 9

In *Schiller and the Historical Character*, Lesley Sharpe concentrates on Schiller's development as a historical dramatist, analysing the effect of the ten-year alliance between the early and late plays, during which Schiller wrote the historical works and taught history at the University of Jena. She shows how, by attempting as a historian to present a complex period and a number of prominent figures, Schiller learnt a great deal about the intricacy of historical forces and about the way in which historical figures are moulded by circumstances — insights which are largely absent from his early plays. The mature dramas illumine for us folk heroes such as William Tell or Joan of Arc, or periods of history such as Elizabeth England or the Thirty Years' War, and Dr Sharpe devotes a chapter to each of the plays in turn, that on *William Tell* being particularly well argued.

This, Schiller's last completed play, has its own peculiar difficulties for the interpreter. It relates the well-known Swiss legend of the hero's defiance of the Habsburgs, against their oppressors. Traditionally, it was the first great literary work one tackled in secondary school in Germany. Those who saw Schiller as a Great Moral

Teacher were keen to interpret *Tell* as an example of the "idyl" as propounded in his essay *On the Nerve and Sentiment in Literature*, and the play also provided welcome support for the Swiss legend of democracy and equality, a legend so expertly and hilariously debunked by Max Frisch in his *Wilhelm Tell für die Schule*.

Yet to see the play in these straightforward heroic terms, all sinewy thighs and noble utterances, is to distort it greatly, as Dr Sharpe convincingly argues. Quite apart from the fact that one has to strain considerably to imagine the author of the politically subtle *Wallenstein* writing a simplistic up-and-at-'em piece, there is the so-called Partridge incident to come to terms with. Here the man who has killed the Emperor appears in disguise on Tell's doorstep to ask for shelter and aid. Tell recalls in horror at the idea of even touching this murderer; but he himself a murderer. No one can simply leave this incident out when staging the play, as too difficult to embody in the whole; or one can see it as an attempt to vindicate Tell — for Partridge killed from revenge and Tell did not. But this arrangement is scarcely convincing, because Schiller has in any case so presented things that we have little inclination to blame Tell. In fact the Partridge incident serves rather to introduce the idea that Tell is a murderer. It makes us ponder Tell's position is — he, like Partridge, killed a tyrant from essentially private motives; the incident also reminds us of the world beyond the Swiss lakes — it is the killing of the Emperor, which ultimately liberates Switzerland, not Tell with his cross-bow. Tell, like *Wallenstein* and Partridge, acts in large measure blindly, hoping to find himself at a crucial juncture of the

forces of history. Dr Sharpe maintains that in writing play about a legendary hero, Schiller wished to demonstrate what such legends are actually made from, and to give us another example of the interdependence of literature and history.

A fascinating by-product of her discussion of the play is the insight it gives into what earlier critics have made of Schiller, for we are given surveys of the relevant criticism, and its nineteenth-century beginnings. Schiller the Saint, Schiller the Libertine, Schiller the Dramatist, Incompetent, Schiller the Great Teacher, battle it out with one another in learned journals and books more than 150 years. A fitting tribute to the present book is to say that it aims to give us Schiller the Historical Dramatist and simply succeeds in doing so.

Germany. A Companion to German Studies, edited by Malcolm Paul, has now appeared in a second edition (690 pp., Methuen, £16, paperback £9.95, 0 416 33650 7). Of its eleven chapters in the first 1974 edition, seven reappear virtually unchanged. W. H. Bruford's chapter on "German Political, Legal and Cultural Institutions" has been replaced by a survey of Germany by W. A. Couper. The new edition is a valuable and reliable critical survey of the American literature of the past 50 years, one that should be of much help to students. Professor Salmon discusses reference to kinds as well as reference to individuals; there is a particularly detailed exegesis of Putnam's writings on "natural kind" terms. At the level of the survey, the only misleading feature is his repeated endorsement of classifications of possible positions which leave no room for theories according to which there is a notion of sense that is non-descriptive and demonstrative. Theists who defend such a notion will also believe in the "directness" of reference of some singular terms in the sense in which Salmon uses that expression. Viz that, mediated by such a term is not mediated by a descriptive sense. The notion of such theories leads to his misstatement of Dummett, for

Subtleties of speech

L. Jonathan Cohen

FRANÇOIS RECANATI

Les Énoncés Performatifs
288pp. Paris: Minuit. 68fr.

In the past thirty or forty years most French philosophers have written in a style that has held little attraction for their English-speaking contemporaries. That plainness of speech which is both as catholic in the range of philosophers' views that it considers and as well-argued in the attitudes that it takes up towards them. (About the only relevant development that Recanati omits to mention is the attempt made about a dozen years ago by a few transformational grammarians, like J. R. Ross and the Lakoffs, to incorporate latent performatives into the underlying structure of English sentences as they then described it.)

The term "performative" was introduced into the vocabulary of philosophy by J. L. Austin in order to name those utterances that seem to constitute the very acts that their verbs are otherwise used to describe. Thus if George says "I promise to meet Mary at the station" his utterance is a performative one since it performs the very act that may be described by the statement "George promised to meet Mary at the station". So the utterance was held not to be true or false, as a statement is. The utterance does something itself, rather than *saying* that something has been done. And a recognition of the importance of performative utterances was welcome to the mill of post-1945 philosophers who wished to stress the

variety of ways in which human language functions within quite normal situations, in opposition to supposedly traditional tendencies to take mere statement or assertion as the norm for all serious purposes.

Two main streams of discussion flowed from the attention Austin directed at this category of utterance. One was influenced by the further development of Austin's own views in his William James Lectures at Harvard in 1955, published posthumously in 1962 under the title *How to do things with words*. Austin was struck by the fact that the distinction between performative and statement-making utterance seems to break down when one considers such utterances as "I affirm that George was at the station" which seems to belong to both categories, or such utterances as "I meet Mary at the station", which seems to make a promise despite being an assertion. Austin therefore developed a new terminology, which set up three different dimensions of description for every linguistic utterance. Roughly, an utterance was described by him as a locutionary act in virtue of what the speaker says, an illocutionary act in virtue of what the speaker does in saying it, and a perlocutionary act in virtue of what the speaker achieves by saying it. Thus every locutionary act can be made explicit, he claimed, by uttering an appropriately performative sentence.

The notion of an illocutionary act is full of difficulties and has led to much controversy, about which Recanati has some illuminating things to say. But the main theme of Recanati's book concerns the other and rather narrower stream of discussion that flowed from

instance, as one who holds that reference is always mediated purely descriptively.

Enthusiasts for semantics will also question Salmon's claim that if we take some general words to refer to kinds, then we must abandon the principle that substitution of coreferential terms in referential occurrences preserves the reference of larger terms containing them. He adapts what has come to be known as the Frege argument in defending this view, and says that that argument leads us to conclude that any two coextensive general terms designate the same kind, unless we give up the above principle. The enthusiast will wonder why Salmon did not consider applying Russell's theory of definite descriptions to functions: if that is done, the application of the Frege argument is blocked.

The second part of the book bears the heading "The Program to Derive Essentialism from the Theory of Reference". In this work, Salmon explicitly notes that an intention to implement such a programme cannot be attributed to Kripke, but he finds sentences in Putnam that express commitment to the possibility of such a derivation. The question of whether, however, be of philosophical interest quite independently of the extent of other writers' commitment to it. On the philosophical question, Salmon's arguments are clear and decisive. The argument from the theory of reference to essentialist conclusions which he regards as most tempting can be summarized thus: "Necessarily, something is a sample of water if and only if it is a sample of the substance of which this liquid is actually a sample; this liquid sample has the structure H₂O; being a sample of the same substance as a given thing consists in having the same chemical structure; hence necessarily every sample of water has the chemical structure H₂O; Salmon notes that though the argument is formally valid, its first premise contains a concealed essentialist supposition, which is not simply part of a theory of reference: the supposition is at least, that necessarily every sample of water has the chemical structure it actually does. Salmon's point here is that this last supposition is not true. The point is rather that it does not follow simply from the theory of reference for

Sampling water and building ships

Christopher Peacocke

NATHAN U. SALMON
Reference and Essence
293pp. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. £15 (paperback, £5.95).
0 631 13004 7

"Could you have had different parents? Could water have had a different chemical structure?" These are model questions about how objects and substances could have been different; they do not seem to be linguistic questions. "What is it for the name 'Thales' to refer to one man rather than another?" That, by contrast, seems to be a question about language, and an answer to it does not obviously entail any particular answer to model questions about objects. We have a strong initial intuition that a theory of what it is for words to refer to particular objects is one thing, a theory of how those objects could have been another.

Nathan Salmon's main thesis in *Reference and Essence* is that this intuition is sound. In particular he argues that there are no interesting essentialist conclusions to be drawn from what he calls "the theory of direct reference" proposed by Donnellan, Putnam, Kaplan, and Kripke.

The first part of his book is devoted to an exposition of those parts of the theory relevant to assessing its consequences, if any, for essentialism. This is a valuable and reliable critical survey of the American literature of the past 50 years, one that should be of much help to students. Professor Salmon discusses reference to kinds as well as reference to individuals; there is a particularly detailed exegesis of Putnam's writings on "natural kind" terms. At the level of the survey, the only misleading feature is his repeated endorsement of classifications of possible positions which leave no room for theories according to which there is a notion of sense that is non-descriptive and demonstrative. Theists who defend such a notion will also believe in the "directness" of reference of some singular terms in the sense in which Salmon uses that expression. Viz that, mediated by such a term is not mediated by a descriptive sense. The notion of such theories leads to his misstatement of Dummett, for

"water"; and indeed if the supposition is true, it allows for the derivation of essentialist conclusions independently of any particular theory of reference.

Reference and Essence also contains two substantial appendices, one on principles of "cross-world identification", the other giving more discussion of the essentialist commitments of that simple argument. The most novel material here concerns the Four Worlds Paradox. Consider a ship built from planks. It seems that this same ship would have been built if all the same materials except for one plank had been used. Suppose then that there is a threshold, k , such that the same ship is built if and only if fewer than k planks of the initial materials from which it is constructed are different. (The fact that we ought really to be concerned with a vague band rather than a specific number here will not matter for the argument.) Salmon then asks us to consider four possible worlds. In world one, a ship, Ship One, is built from two planks. Two is built from planks more than k of which are different from those used in world one to build Ship One; in world three, Ship Three is built from planks fewer than k of which are different from those used in world one to build Ship One; and in world four, Ship Four is built from planks fewer than k of which are different from those used in world three to build Ship Two. By the threshold principle we can have that Ships One and Three are identical, and so are Two and Four, while Ships One and Two are distinct, and hence so too are Three and Four. Yet if we choose the case carefully it is consistent with this example that Ships Three and Four are constructed from exactly the same planks (in the same way, by the same person, at the same time, if you want it); so how can Ships Three and Four be distinct?

Salmon favours a solution according to which one says that if a given ship is actually made from a set of planks, then it could only be made from sets of planks differing by less than k members from the given set; but if it had actually been made from a different set, then it would have had a different range of possibilities — it could have been made from sets of planks differing by less than k planks from that different set. In the terms of the modal logicians, then, Salmon argues that the "accessibility" relation between possible worlds is not transitive; that is, in some cases one

world is accessible from (possibly relative to) a second, that second world is accessible from a third, but the third is not accessible from the first world.

It is hard to see how this solves all the problems. It does indeed explain why the sentence "Ship One could not have been built from a set of planks differing by more than k from those from which it was actually built" is true with respect to world one. But take all the worlds which are within the range of the quantifiers over the possible worlds (and so including those which are possible, those which are possibly possible, those which ...); we can raise the question whether the ship built in a given world from certain planks is identical with the ship built in another world from a second set. This question is not asked from the standpoint of a particular world, and does not need some world to be designated as the actual world before it can be answered. But the threshold principle seems, by a simple transitivity argument, to lead to contradictory answers: for a sequence

Following unfaithfully

Daniel Johnson

ALFRED SCHAEFER

Die Schopenhauer-Welt
344pp. Berlin: Verlag: DM44.
3 87061 227 4

What is one to say of a book that shows intelligence and love for its subject, yet is careless, muddled and muddling? It is angry letters to confused or headstrong disciples, leave no doubt about what Schopenhauer himself would have said. Alfred Schaefer has not, he claims, written for philosophers, yet he uses anachronistic technical terms, such as *Wissenschaft*, in a quite haphazard way. He bases an entire chapter on fragments which Schopenhauer declined to publish, without telling us that this was the case. He rarely does his distinguishing between Schopenhauer's Nietzsche's and his own ideas. The painstaking printing and numerous quite irrelevant illustrations make a poor impression. It is regrettable, too, that it deflates

the descriptive sense communicated by the utterance "I promise to meet you at the station" has presumably to be the same as the literal sense of "I will meet you at the station". Moreover, by uttering the latter, say, give rise to relevant expectations on which the hearer might rely, and in virtue of this the utterance would constitute a promise. Hence, if the sense actually communicated by "I promise to meet you at the station" is the same as the literal sense of "I will meet you at the station", it is clear that the former sense asserts in its literal sense is verified by what is achieved in virtue of the sense that it actually communicates.

Many other similarly subtle points are made by Recanati. And accordingly there will perhaps be those who object that they would rather read the other kind of French philosopher, who never bothers himself with such minutiae of analysis. But this would be to turn one's back on the pursuit of truth. It is only when philosophical ideas are pursued all the way down into the finest of fine print — when we pursue the argument whithersoever it leads, as Plato put it — that genuine understanding becomes possible, as distinct from the illusion of understanding which is sometimes promoted by oracular generalities. Now are the core issues in pragmatics at all unimportant even for our practical concerns. In the study of language-learning or of speech defects accurate statement and successful hypothesizing are only possible on the basis of adequate linguistic theory, and within linguistic theory it is clear that pragmatics, or the study of speech-acts, must have a place.

of sets of planks successive members of which differ by less than the threshold can have first and last members differing by more than the threshold. Salmon rejects treatments of this particular problem which make limited use of a counterpart relation, but they have no difficulty with this question.

The organization and layout of *Reference and Essence* are exemplary; the seams between the English and the formulae are invisible. Salmon's expository style, though, is one of Brocknerian expansiveness: his will help the student but may produce an impression of distinctly gradual progress on the professional. With such space available, it is also a pity that there is not more substantive assessment of essentialism itself, and some consideration of the relations between identity across worlds and identity over time. But the book as a whole leaves one eager to learn the results of Salmon's future development — however expansive — of these themes.

such a followable polyglot should misquote even Nietzsche's "Denn alle Lust will Ewigkeit".

Yet the book contains valuable material: it takes Lukács's libe about Schopenhauer's "decadent cosmopolitanism" more seriously than Lukács did, arguing that Schopenhauer was a kind of monarch over the water for the "ignored geniuses and misunderstood women" at whom Kautsky sneered. The fact that many of these people had been at the barricades in 1849, when Schopenhauer lent the troops, his opera-glasses, proves that he despised his own followers no less than his enemies; and that the contrast between his ethics of pity and the Prussian dedication of Kant was not as sharp as Schaefer claims. The best chapter, "Labours of the Followers" (doubtless heartfelt), which interprets the works of Schopenhauer with Darwin, treats well the responses of Dilthey, Volkelt, Scheler, and Heidegger to Schopenhauer's reconceptualization of the "being of the world"; his discussion of historical consciousness